DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 339 238 FL 019 978

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TITLE Making the Most of Audio. Technology in Language Learning Series.
INSTITUTION Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, London (England).
REPORT NO ISBN-0-948003-73-1
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 62p.; For related documents, see FL 019 976-981.
AVAILABLE FROM Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Regent's College, Inner Circle, London NW1 4NS, England (6.95 British pounds).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Audio Equipment; Audiovisual Aids; Class Activities; Distance Education; Educational Technology; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; French; Language Laboratories; *Language Skills; Language Teachers; *Listening Skills; *Radio; *Second Language Instruction; Speech Communication; Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

Prepared for practicing language teachers, this book's aim is to help them make the most of audio, a readily accessible resource. The book shows, with the help of numerous practical examples, how a range of language skills can be developed. Most examples are in French. Chapters cover the following information: (1) making the most of audio (e.g., for and against its use, some approaches to making radio programs, sources, copyright); (2) using audio to develop listening skills (e.g., spot the word, frequency grids, spot the discrepancy, ordering/sequencing, matching halves, gap-filling, listening grids, translation and re-translation); (3) using audio to develop speaking skills (e.g., repetition, echoing, prediction, questioning, dialogue cues, role play, preparation of radio programs); (4) using audio to develop writing skills (e.g., question and assisted answer, wordsquares and crosswords, dictations, script completion, paraphrasing, transcription, essay writing); (5) managing the system (e.g., basic equipment, radios, recorders, playback machines, student loan pool, listening conditions, technical services, security, storage and retrieval systems, cataloging systems, language laboratories). Contains 22 references. (LB)

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Technology in Language Learning

# Making the Most of Audio

by Anthony Barley

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TECHNOLOGY IN LANGUAGE LEARNING
(*Series editor* Brian Hill)

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# Making the most of audio

Anthony Barley

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Photograph on p 2 taken from *The Listening Schools* by K V Bailey (BBC, 1957)
Illustrations by Pieter Sluis
Cover design by Pieter Sluis

First published 1990
© 1990 Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
ISBN 0 948003 73 1

Printed in Great Britain by C.M.D. Limited

Published by Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Regent's College, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS

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Acknowledgements

I should like to acknowledge the help, support and encouragement that Brian Hill has given me during the writing of this book: the source of many of the activities I describe will be obvious to anybody who is familiar with his work. Ute Hitchin has been incredibly patient in waiting for the completion of the manuscript, whilst Ann Naylor, Linda Walker and Joyce Smith have all helped to turn it into something that a printer could deal with. I owe particular thanks to the many teachers over the years who have been generous enough to let me sit in their classrooms and see them at work: that generosity is very much appreciated, and has come from too many people to be acknowledged individually. It is clear, though, that without it this book would not have been possible.

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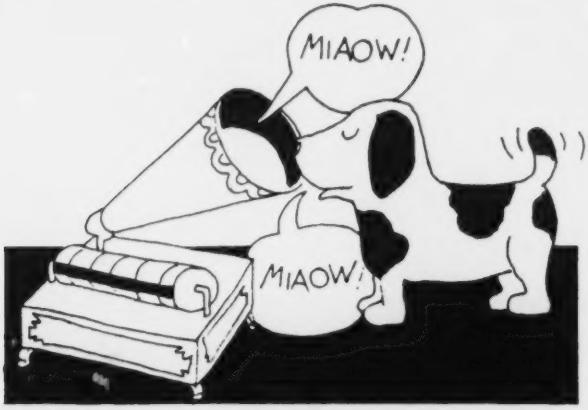
CHAPTER 1

# *Making the most of audio*

This is a book for practising language teachers. Its aim is to help them - whether they teach English or a foreign language - to make the most of a readily accessible resource, which can be of enormous value to language learners of all ages and at all stages of their study. Through practical examples it is intended to show how a range of language skills can be developed; there are also sections dealing with classroom organisation, including the making of recordings, and with points to be borne in mind in the selection of equipment, as well as suggestions for sources of further information and advice.

The mechanical reproduction of human speech has come a long way since Thomas Edison's invention of the wax-cylinder phonograph, just as radio is very different today from Marconi's first experiments with 'wireless telegraphy'.




But language teachers were not slow to see the potential of these technological devices as learning tools - radio, with its ability to bring a vast range of speakers into their classrooms and recordings, albeit scratchy and distorted in the early days, enabling students to listen as often as they wished to voices which never tired nor varied in pronunciation or intonation. It was the development of the tape recorder in the 1950's and 1960's, however, which allowed the full potential of electronically reproduced speech to be realised, as classrooms were equipped first with individual machines and then with language laboratories, while battery-powered portable recorders made it possible for radio producers to collect virtually unlimited quantities of spontaneous, unscripted, 'actuality' material.

A Sixth Form enjoys the French broadcast

From the early 60's onwards, in Professor Eric Hawkins' words, *'native-speaking voices came flooding into classrooms where in the 1950's only the teacher's voice had been heard'*. (*Modern Languages in the Curriculum*, revised edition, CUP, 1987).

Theories of language learning based on the work of the behavioural psychologist B F Skinner underpinned the use in the 1960s of the new equipment, only to be comprehensively discredited by the criticisms of linguists - most notably Noam Chomsky. Doubts crept in about what had seemed to teachers to be the dawn of a new era, and these doubts were supported by the evidence of many, which showed that the claims made for the efficacy of the new equipment and methods had been vastly overstated. Language laboratories - for which all too often inadequate money for maintenance had been set aside - frequently lay unused, and the simple tape recorder was not made more popular in teachers' eyes by the finding of the NFER, reported by Clare Burstall in *Primary French in the Balance*, that children appeared to dislike its use, and frequently claimed not to understand material on tape that was played to them.

However, the development in the last ten years or so of communicative methodologies of language teaching, with an increasing emphasis on the use of 'authentic' material, has led to a more balanced view of the value of radio and the tape recorder, both in and out of the classroom. Equipment has become cheaper and more reliable, while the cost of tape has fallen dramatically. New developments in the design of what should perhaps be called learning (rather than language) laboratories, along the lines for instance of Strathclyde Regional Council's 'perimeter audio learning equipment' (PALE)*, have resulted in systems which, to quote Strathclyde's evaluation of PALE, combine 'minimum complexity with maximum flexibility' - and, what is more,

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* [See the National Council for Educational Technology USPEC. Information Sheet No: 4 'Language Laboratories,' January 1987]

enable a laboratory to be installed at a cost of between a fifth and an eighth of a conventional laboratory.

In fact the biggest obstacle to the use of audio resources in language learning probably lies in teachers' attitudes. What are their advantages and disadvantages?

## For and against the use of audio material

In the age of television and video-recordings, audio tapes and radio may seem to be the poor relations. They lack the glamour of the newer medium, and they may not have the same superficial attractiveness to pupils; for the vast majority of learners' speech radio is not always a familiar part of their lives outside school or college; understanding a disembodied voice may not be as easy as following a speaker whose lip movements and facial and bodily expressions can provide valuable clues to comprehension.

However, audio has a number of distinct advantages. In comparison with television it is cheap in terms of both provision and running costs: whereas a television set or video recorder may need to be shared between several teachers, no language classroom need be without its own tape recorder, whilst the near-universal personal cassette recorder means that setting 'audio homework' is a distinct possibility. Audio cassettes pose fewer problems of storage than videotapes, being only a fraction of the size of the latter, and because manufacturers have settled on a single format they have the huge advantage of complete compatibility and interchangeability, whatever make of equipment is being used. Durability is another point in their favour: provided that tape of reasonable quality is used and that sensible precautions are taken over maintenance of equipment and storage of tapes (see Chapter 5 for a fuller discussion of these points), they should be usable without obvious signs of deterioration for a very long time.

Teachers quite rightly look to overseas broadcasters for authentic material, and in this respect radio can offer access to an unequalled source of it, at a very modest cost in terms of outlay on receiving equipment, in comparison with satellite television - and it will continue to have the edge until satellite receivers are much more widespread than is the case at the moment. [See p 50 for information on foreign broadcasting organisations.] Learning to listen carefully is, it goes without saying, a vital skill for the language learner to develop, and in some television programmes - particularly where there is a 'voice over' - the visuals may actually make it harder to follow what is being said, whereas audio allows learners to give their full concentration to the words they are hearing.

For ease and flexibility of operation most radios and audio tape recorders leave television and video recorders standing, and the equipment available in most schools makes the quality of sound reproduction vastly superior where audio is concerned. One of the few drawbacks at the moment is that only (relatively expensive) educational radio recorders are fitted with a time switch, unlike video recorders on which these devices are now standard. Domestic equipment requires a separate timer, although the BBC is currently developing a system known as Radio Data System (RDS), in which a coded signal could eventually label each programme with an individual code which would enable radios capable of receiving such a signal to switch on (and record if necessary) the correct station at the correct time.†

† [For further information on RDS see the National Council for Educational Technology USPEC Information Sheet No 12: 'Radio Data System (RDS) and School Broadcasts', May 1988.]

These specific advantages of audio resources go beyond the general value of enabling the learner to be exposed to the flood of native-speaking voices to which Eric Hawkins referred - voices young and old, male and female, metropolitan and provincial, serious and light-hearted. Radio has a particular power to stimulate the imagination - everybody has heard the story of the old lady who was asked whether she preferred radio or television, and plumped for radio ... *'because the pictures are so much better'*. She was perhaps thinking particularly of radio drama, with its ability to go beyond the merely literal, and to transport the listener instantly in time and space; there are many different types of programme, however, all of which have their uses in the language classroom.

## Some approaches to the making of radio programmes

The first distinction that can be made is between those programmes which are produced specifically as a language teaching resource and those which are simply part of a broadcasting organisation's general output. The latter are often referred to generically as 'authentic material', but this is misleading, since the former can equally well include such material. The hallmark of 'purpose built' language broadcasts is the choice - implicit or explicit - that has been made on linguistic grounds by the author or producer as to what should be included in a programme. The criteria for choice might include the topic dealt with, the range of vocabulary or structures to be included, the language functions which are exemplified - or a combination of any of these.

The most obvious way of exercising this choice - though not necessarily the easiest or most satisfactory - is to use a completely scripted or dramatised format. This gives complete control over the situation and the language used and the speakers can deliver the script at a controlled pace: the disadvantage is that it is extremely difficult to avoid artificiality, particularly with 'elementary' material. Feature programmes - the mainstay of BBC School Radio's *Voix de France* and *Deutsch für die Oberstufe* series, for example - can use documentary or archive material, when a degree of control can be exercised in the initial choice of such material, supplemented by a linking script in which the presenter can explain or paraphrase what might otherwise prove difficult for the student. A technique used by the producers of BBC courses for adult beginners, where unscripted, natural speech is highly valued, is to make sure in the collection of 'actuality' recordings that the questions put by an interviewer are likely to lead to answers containing the type of language required at that stage by the student. This has been described as 'controlled spontaneity': if an interviewee is shown a photograph of, say, General de Gaulle, and asked *Qui est-ce?*, the answer will most probably be either *C'est + noun equivalent* or *Ah, je ne sais pas* and is most unlikely to contain a string of imperfect subjunctives! At a slightly more sophisticated level participants can be provided with a structure or framework for an interview, or asked to imagine themselves in a given situation: within these constraints they can say whatever comes naturally to them. (This technique is described in an article by Marion Geddes and Ron White in the *British Journal of Language Teaching*, Vol 16, No 3, Winter 1978: 'The Use of Semi-scripted Simulated Authentic Speech and Listening Comprehension'.)

## Sources of audio material

Radio broadcasts - recorded for ease and effectiveness of exploitation - are probably the most obvious source of audio material. BBC School Radio has for many years been

producing a range of series at levels ranging from post-beginners to advanced; the greatest provision has been in French and German, although Spanish and Russian are featured from time to time, whilst Italian has recently been added in the context of work-related material, and an Urdu series for learners in the early stages was recently broadcast. Full details of all BBC School Radio series are sent each year to all schools and colleges in the United Kingdom, and the leaflet containing this information also gives details of the Emergency Cassette Service which allows teachers to purchase recordings of programmes which they might have missed or accidentally erased. (See Useful Addresses, p 49ff).

With the exception of some work-related series, all School Radio programmes are entirely in the target language, and normally assume the mediation of a teacher. Programmes produced by the BBC Continuing Education (CE) Radio department, however, are made with an audience of unsupported home-based learners in mind, and therefore contain - at least at first and second stage level - explanations and teaching material in English, although the target language is usually exemplified by recordings of native speakers using the technique of 'controlled spontaneity' described above. Publicity leaflets giving details of BBC Radio output (together with information on television language series for adults) are distributed to colleges of further and higher education as well as to adult education centres, and are also sent to public libraries. The output ranges from short courses in basic transactional language for holiday and business travellers in a wide variety of languages (from French and German through Greek and Portuguese to Arabic and Chinese) to moderately advanced courses in the main European languages.

The BBC English department of the BBC World Service claims to be the largest English-teaching organisation in the world, with millions of students. English teaching radio programmes, with explanations in 37 languages as well as entirely in English, are broadcast to most areas of the world from London, and by some 300 overseas radio stations in more than 100 countries. These programmes range from elementary series for children, for teenagers and for adults, to advanced series which include not only general material (magazine-style programmes, for example, or comprehension lessons based on specially written short stories) but also courses in business and technical English, as well as series for teachers. Although many of these broadcasts are accompanied by books, they are made on the assumption that the majority of listeners will not have books, and all programmes are therefore designed to stand on their own. In addition to broadcast series, BBC English also publish a number of audio courses for people who wish to learn English at home or in the classroom: although some are linked to radio series they can all be used independently and again range in level from material for beginners to that aimed at advanced students. Information on any of the broadcast or published material can be obtained from BBC English, PO Box 76, Bush House, London WC2B 4PH, and BBC English courses are on display to personal callers at the BBC World Shop, Bush House, London WC2B 4PH.

For anyone in search of 'authentic' material, of course, the airwaves are humming with voices which can be recorded and used in the classroom. For teachers of English the BBC World Service may be the principal source, though the Voice of America will also provide a wealth of useful recordings, and many overseas broadcasting organisations also transmit English programmes, while teachers of French and German can tune in without too much difficulty to long-wave (LW) or medium-wave (MW) transmissions. The quality of reception - particularly where short-wave (SW) is concerned - may be an obstacle, and it might be worthwhile to try and establish a link

with an overseas colleague who can record material from VHF/FM transmissions in his or her own country, in exchange for similar recordings of domestic BBC broadcasts. Such an arrangement may of course mean that there is a delay between the transmission of a broadcast and its use with students: if topicality is an important consideration you will want to make your own recordings, even if some sound quality is sacrificed as a result. An article by David Crookall in *System*, Vol 12, No 2, 1984 - 'Rigs and posts: radio reception technology for FLL' gives useful advice on the reception of SW broadcasts.

Many published language courses have a taped component, which can range all the way from studio recordings - sometimes rather wooden - of scripted dialogues, to unscripted interviews, extracts from genuine news broadcasts, examples of radio commercials, and so on. Even material which on a first hearing does not seem very promising, however, can often give rise to worthwhile activities - and not necessarily those which were envisaged by the authors of the course of which the tapes are a part. BBC CE language courses all have accompanying cassettes, which contain not only explanations and exercises, but also much of the 'actuality' material from the broadcasts - and also in some cases dialogues, conversations and exercises for which there was not room in the broadcasts themselves.

Commercially available tapes provide a further source of audio material, and range from academic discussions of authors or literary works, to archive material from broadcasting organisations such as the collection of interviews by Jacques Chancel, *Radioscopie*, originally broadcast by France-Inter. Many language departments will also have their own collections of home-made recordings, of course: the interview with a foreign visitor or the foreign language assistant perhaps, or material collected on visits abroad, not to mention recordings of students themselves. When one adds the potentially unlimited range of material offered by the sound tracks of video recordings, used either independently or as a stage in the exploitation of the television programme, it can be seen that the scope for using audio material is simply enormous.

## A word on copyright

> *'Copyright' is the name given to the principle that those who create works of the intellect should have a special relationship with them, in short, they should own them as property. It seems only equitable that this should be so but there is a more pragmatic reason. If those who create or produce materials are able to control the use society makes of them and can, by implication, make a charge for granting permission for such use, they will be encouraged to produce more and so benefit, especially, education and the arts and sciences. The United Kingdom, in common with all developed countries which have a large media industry, has a strong protectionist copyright law with only limited concessions to those who wish to use material. Those who find this restrictive might consider that rigorous copyright law is the price we pay for the benefit of living in a country which has a thriving publishing and audio-visual industry.*
>
> (NCET Information Sheet: *Copyright - the Act of 1988, Oct 1989 (Revision 2))*

In the UK the legislation which governs the use of copyright material for learning purposes is the *Copyright, Design and Patents Act, 1988*, which came into force on 1 August 1989. Before this, concessions by rights holders had allowed schools and

colleges to record and retain copies of educational broadcasts for up to three years. The new Act gives rights owners the power to introduce licencing schemes for educational use: at the time of going to press these schemes have not been finalised, but as far as broadcasts are concerned (and this means **all** broadcasts, and not only **educational** broadcasts) this means that, in exchange for a *per capita* charge based on the number and age of the students in an educational establishment, schools and colleges will be able to record and retain them for an indefinite period. There is doubt as to whether establishments providing further and adult education other than through a Local Education Authority count as 'educational establishments'. Such establishments include services training establishments and private language schools. Clarification is being sought. For commercially produced sound recordings the provisions of the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society's licencing scheme will continue to apply.

Acquiring audio material is not in itself too much of a problem. What is the best way to make use of it once it is available? The following three chapters offer some suggestions for the exploitation of radio programmes and audio tapes in the development of the skills of listening, speaking and writing.

It goes without saying, of course, that the role of the teacher is crucial, not only in the initial selection of material that will be appropriate for the needs of the students, but even more so in providing activities that will enable the students to master the material and learn effectively from it, and these are the kinds of activity which are suggested in Chapters 2-4. What is just as important, however, is that students should know the purpose of what they are asked to do, and what they should be able to do when the activity has been successfully completed. I take it as axiomatic that students have been made aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it.

CHAPTER 2

# *Using audio to develop listening skills*

If I deal separately with the skills of listening, speaking and writing it is not because I wish to imply that they can be isolated from each other. They are obviously not merely linked but interdependent, and in practice an activity which is designed to develop and enhance listening skills may involve other skills as well. It is convenient, however, to give each skill its own chapter, partly in order to emphasise what I see as the fundamental importance of listening as a basis from which the other skills can be developed, but also to allow teachers to plan students' work in such a way that listening activities are not neglected or overlooked. Listening is not an 'add-on extra', something which can suddenly be grafted on in the last term before the examination: it must be an integral part of the language course from the very outset, and its absence deprives students of an essential stage in their learning.

Some readers may be surprised or disappointed by the absence of a section devoted specifically to reading skills. Again, this is not because I wish to underplay the importance of teaching students how to read, or because I do not think reading can be linked to audio texts. Many of the activities in this and the following chapters will involve a certain amount of reading, although it will tend to be incidental, and subservient to the development of the other skills. Following a script in conjunction with a recording can be of considerable assistance in helping students to improve their reading fluency: BBC School Radio, for example, offers primary schools a series called *Listening and Reading* with precisely that aim (albeit for children for whom English is their mother tongue, rather than those learning it as a second language). And Brian Hill (*Making the Most of Video*, CILT, 1989) refers to a survey in which many adult learners using BBC language courses reported that their reading skills had been improved even though the series they followed had not explicitly practised them. There is a narrower range of activities to develop reading, however, than for the other skills, and it seemed more useful to concentrate on the latter.

Before dealing with specific activities there are a few general points which need to be made. The first of these is the importance of ensuring that listening conditions for the students - and the quality of sound being offered to them - are as good as possible. Chapter 5 deals with this aspect in detail, but at this point it is sufficient to point out that for learners struggling to get to grips with the sounds of a new language it should not normally be part of the teaching strategy to require them to overcome the obstacles of poor acoustics or a distorted source of sound.

After quality there is the question of quantity: what length of text should we expect them to cope with? Particularly for beginners it is much better that the passages should be too short rather than too long. On some of my visits to schools I have been distressed to find classes being played a complete fifteen or twenty minute broadcast, and then having to answer questions on it. The teacher, of course, is in the lucky position of not only being proficient in the language, but of having a transcript of the programme, which s/he has already listened to beforehand. For the student, though, it is a rather different matter: the stream of sound must be listened to, and processed first for recognition and then for comprehension; this information has to be stored in the

memory; a similar procedure is necessary when a question is put, when the memory has to be searched for the required information, which then has to be expressed in the target language, in the company of a group of people who will not necessarily be sympathetic to the difficulties the student is confronting. Small wonder that if this is what students think of as 'listening comprehension', it is not an activity that they always relish. From the teacher's point of view the experience is just as unsatisfactory: not only are students understandably reluctant to commit themselves to answering questions, but if they give an 'incorrect' answer, is it because:

(a) they didn't understand the text?
(b) they didn't understand the question?
(c) they couldn't remember the required information?
(d) they couldn't express the required information in the target language?

This suggests that there is a very strong case for ensuring not only that listening texts are of manageable length for the stage the students have reached, but also that among the activities based on them there should be plenty of opportunities for students to demonstrate their comprehension without having to express themselves in the target language. Progression is important too, so that students are enabled to move from recognition through comprehension to expression. A further distinction is very usefully made by Brian Hill (op cit) between gist comprehension and what he calls 'active listening' or 'listening to learn'. He reminds us that in the language classroom we are concerned as much with the way in which a message is being conveyed as with the message itself, and that we must therefore take care to provide learners with activities that will involve them actively in *becoming aware of the 'how' as being at least as important as the 'what'.*

Implicit in the above is the fact that audio material will not do your teaching for you: it is up to the teacher to select an appropriate text, in terms of quantity and of content, and to provide activities that will not only allow the learner to understand the text in question, but also help them to develop strategies for understanding which can be applied on future occasions.

## ★ Spot the word

To encourage careful listening, with purpose, and to provide a means of making words and phrases memorable even if students do not understand the complete text, they can be asked simply to indicate whether or not they heard a particular word or phrase.

There are a number of variations on this. With 'word bingo', for example, students can be given a list of words of which some occur in the text and others do not: they must indicate by ticking them the words that they hear. For example, *Branchez-vous!* (BBC School Radio) includes weather forecasts in its 'breakfast magazine' format:

*Tick the following words or phrases if you hear them*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *de la pluie* | [ ] | *ensoleillé* | [ ] |
| *des averses* | [ ] | *du vent* | [ ] |
| *du soleil* | [ ] | *des orages* | [ ] |

Alternatively you (or the students) can prepare a number of cards, each with a key phrase: these are distributed round the class, and the appropriate card must be held up when that phrase is heard.

## ★ Frequency grids

Another device which can be used when words or phrases occur a number of times - say in *vox pop* interviews, where a series of people reply to the same question or questions - is to have students tick the word or phrase each time they hear it. In *A vous la France* (BBC), for example, where passers-by are asked where they are from:

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Je suis français(e)* | | | | | | |
| *Je suis de Grenoble* | | | | | | |
| *Je ne suis pas de Grenoble* | | | | | | |
| *Je viens de Taïwan* | | | | | | |

## ★ Stop me when you hear ...

Another variation of word-spotting is to write on the board or display on the overhead projector a list of words or phrases from the broadcast/tape, and to tell the students to make you stop the tape whenever they hear a word from the list. They can do this either by calling 'Stop!', or by raising a hand. An element of competition can be introduced if the class is divided into two teams, with a judge to decide which was the first to put a hand up - probably less distracting to the class next door in this case than calling out 'Stop'!

## ★ Spot the discrepancy

As with the previous activity, this is an excellent way of encouraging close and careful listening, as the student may need to react at any moment to what s/he hears. In this case students are provided with an amended transcript of a section of the broadcast: the amended text should not contain linguistic errors, but could substitute synonyms or antonyms, add or omit adjectives or adverbs, and so on. Students listen to the excerpt and simply underline or circle any differences they detect between the tape and their text.

### *Un ragazzo di Firenze*

*(original version)*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Gianni* | *Paolo Guasconi, un ragazzo di Firenze. E di Firenze, vero?* |
| *Paolo Guasconi* | *Sì, sono di Firenze, ma non sono nato qui, sono nato a Siena. Comunque, ho sempre abitato in questa città, tranne qualche viaggio che ho fatto all'estero. Sono stato negli Stati Uniti per un anno per motivi di studio. Poi sono stato diverse volte in Inghilterra ed in Scozia anche. Ho fatto un viaggio in Olanda, poi ho visitato L'Austria e Vienna in particolare. E basta poi ...* |
| *Gianni* | *Ecco, allora Stati Uniti, Inghilterra, Scozia, Olanda. Ma a Firenze quando ci è stato?* |

### *Una ragazza di Firenze*

*(amended version)*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Gianni* | *Paola Guasconi, una ragazza di Roma. E di Roma, no?* |
| *Paola Guasconi* | *No, sono di Firenze, ma non sono nata qui, sono nata a Siena. Comunque, ho sempre abitato a Roma, tranne qualche viaggio che ho fatto all'estero. Sono stata negli Stati Uniti per due anni per motivi di lavoro. Poi sono andata molte volte in Inghilterra ed in Giappone anche. Ho fatto qualche viaggio in Olanda, ed ho anche visitato l'Austria e Salzburg in particolare. E basta poi ...* |
| *Gianni* | *Ecco, allora Stati Uniti, Giappone, Olanda ed Austria.* (...) |

(from *Punti di Vista*, BBC Radio)

Depending on the stage the students have reached you may want to increase or decrease the number of changes you make to the original text. Students will vary, of course, in the speed at which they can carry out the activity; there are several ways in which you can help them:

- by playing the excerpt before giving out the amended transcript;
- by having them follow the transcript on a first hearing without making any marks;
- by stopping the tape at intervals;
- by playing the tape a number of times.

Because different students work at different speeds this activity lends itself particularly to the language laboratory, where each student can stop or replay the tape as often as is necessary. When the tape is played to a whole class it can be very frustrating for a student either to mark the differences immediately, but then to have to wait while others catch up, or - perhaps worse - to feel inadequate because s/he cannot keep up with the rest of the class.

## ★ Identify the speaker

Yet another device for encouraging students to listen carefully to a text is to have them identify the speaker of certain words or phrases.

| | *Frau Hadrian* | *Frau 1* | *Frau 2* | *Frau 3* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Wie komme ich hier zum Rathaus?* | | | | |
| *Entschuldigen Sie bitte* | | | | |
| *Nehmen Sie die Linie eins* | | | | |
| *Dahinter liegt der Schnoor* | | | | |
| *Rechts um die Ecke* | | | | |
| *Fünf Minuten zu Fuß* | | | | |

(from *Deutsch Direkt*, BBC Radio)

## ★ Ordering/sequencing

In this type of activity students are beginning to get to grips with the meaning of the text. At its simplest it can resemble the previous one: a number of words or phrases from the text are given, but in an order different from the one in which they are heard; students simply number them in the order in which they occur. This can be done as a two- or three-phase activity: in the first phase the text is played, in the second the list is handed out and the order marked, while an optional third phase can provide an opportunity for checking.

More demanding is to require students to re-order a transcript which has been mixed up: again, they could either number the sections in the right order, or write out the complete text. It can be useful to have them work - in pairs or groups, say - on the jumbled transcript before hearing the text, to try and work out a logical/sensible/appropriate order: listening then provides confirmation or an opportunity for correction, and can lead to discussion of whether there might in fact be justifiable alternatives.

## *Chez le boucher*

- *Non, on a déjà eu de l'agneau cette semaine. C'est combien le steak?*
- *Vous aimez peut-être le veau? Il est très bon, regardez, madame.*
- *Non, madame, il n'y a plus de mouton. Mais voici un beau morceau d'agneau.*
- *C'est 75f le kilo, n'est-ce pas? Alors, donnez-moi trois kilos et demi de veau.*
- *Je voudrais quelque chose pour demain. Vous avez du mouton?*
- *C'est un peu trop cher.*
- *C'est 80f le kilo, madame.*

(from *Par étapes*, BBC School Radio)

It may be worth noting that the larger the 'chunks' of text which are moved, the more straightforward the task of reordering them: reversing two halves of a text, for example, is obviously less demanding than putting half a dozen sentences into the right order, whilst sorting sentences in which every word is out of order is harder still - and in fact probably not a very productive exercise.

## ★ True/false statements

This again is an activity where a set of statements based on the listening text, some of which are true and some false, can be given to the students before or after a first playing of the passage.

*Put a ✓ against the statements that are true and a X against those that are not.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Paolo was born in Rome. | [ ] |
| He says he has always lived in Florence. | [ ] |
| He went to the United States in order to work. | [ ] |
| He has visited Holland. | [ ] |
| etc. | |

(from *Punti di Vista*, BBC Radio)

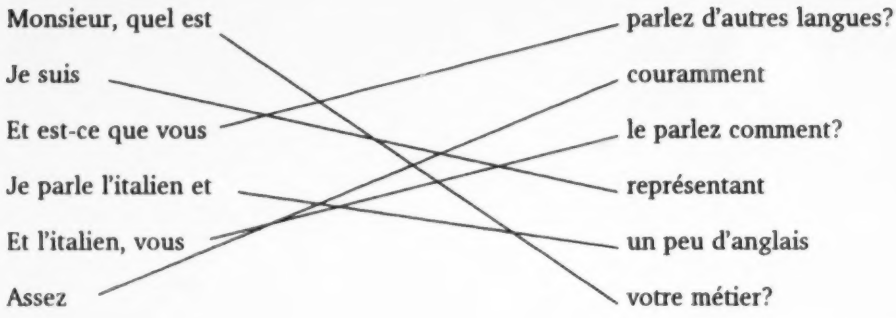
It can be useful to add a third category as well: statements for which there is no supporting evidence in the text, though they may in fact be true, eg *Paolo studied dentistry in the United States*, or *He has travelled to India and Pakistan*. These could be marked with a ? perhaps.

A further stage of this activity is to ask the students to correct the statements which are untrue, though if this is done in the target language it perhaps belongs more properly in the section on speaking activities. The question of whether this exercise should be carried out in the target language or not is one for the teacher to consider beforehand, along with whether or not the statements should be in front of students on the first hearing.

## ★ Matching halves

A similar activity is to get students to match items from a text - either two parts of a phrase or sentence, or a statement or question and its response.

*Link the halves to make the right sentence*




(from *A vous la France!*, BBC TV)

## ★ Multiple choice questions

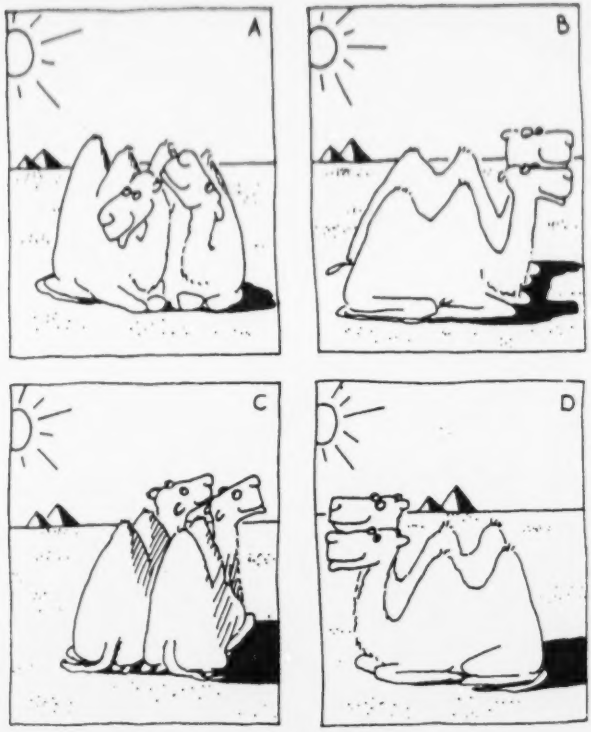
You will need to consider the same points in the case of multiple choice questions. This technique for testing understanding is not always a very popular one: many teachers (and indeed students) were put off by the tortuously-devised distractors of some CSE and GCE examinations. My own view is that as a **classroom** technique multiple choice questions are very useful: obviously there is not the same need for the meticulous care taken by examination boards to ensure that they satisfy stringent criteria of reliability, validity and so on; it is sufficient to provide one alternative which is unarguably the right answer, and to make sure that the level of language of the questions (if the target language is used) is no more difficult than that of the text.

## ★ Match/complete the picture

Another activity which tests comprehension without requiring a verbal response from students is to have them choose from two or more pictures the one which corresponds to the text.

'You will hear David Taylor saying something else about camels. Look at the drawings below. As you listen, tick the drawing that matches his explanation. Play the piece twice.'

A [ ] B [ ] C [ ] D [ ]




David Taylor: *But he does other things as well.*

Presenter: *Do tell me.*

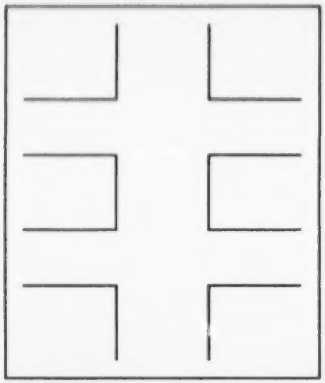
David Taylor: *Well, for example, camels, when they are lying down on the desert floor, and the sun is passing through the heavens during the day, they will turn so that they always, as they lie, face the sun, in other words, keeping their nose towards the sun and thereby exposing the smallest surface area for the absorption of solar radiation. And so, as the sun goes from east to west, so, rather like a sort of living sundial, the camels move in order to make sure that they don't pick up too much heat.*

(from *How to Listen* by Marion Geddes, BBC English by Radio and TV)

A variation on this is to have the students produce the drawing themselves.

For example:

'Listen to the woman asking for directions, and mark on the street grid the suggested route and the position of the post office.'



*Madame X:* *Pardon, monsieur. Pour aller à la poste, s'il vous plaît?*
*Passant:* *Pour aller à la poste? Alors, vous prenez la deuxième rue à droite, et la poste est sur votre gauche.*
*Madame X:* *La deuxième à droite, et c'est à gauche. Merci, monsieur.*

Many types of descriptive text lend themselves to this activity - people talking about where they live, physical appearances - even weather forecasts can be treated in this way, where students add conventional symbols to maps in accordance with what the forecaster says. One example I came across (albeit with an intermediate group) was with *Téléjournal,* the retransmission by BBC TV of a European - in this case French - newscast. The teacher had made a sound-only recording of an item reporting the kidnapping in Paris of a Belgian businessman; the students had to listen to the description by the newsreader of the route taken by the kidnappers, and mark it on a photocopy of a Paris street map.

## ★ Hunting and gathering

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These activities are just as important for language learners as they were for our Stone Age forebears! Students are asked to listen to a passage a number of times and make a list of all the words or expressions that belong to a particular linguistic category. There are three main areas to choose from, and the choice will depend partly on the text, partly on the need of the students, partly on the stage they have reached.

**LEXICAL**. *Tell me all the words you heard for items of food and drink/occupations/weather conditions*, etc.

**FUNCTIONAL**. *What expressions did you hear which convey regret/indicate the speaker is happy/request information/express enthusiasm/offer encouragement?*, etc.

**GRAMMATICAL**. *Pick out all the adjectives/past participles/abstract nouns/personal pronouns, etc, from this passage.*

In one class I visited the teacher was using a news broadcast which included a report on the previous day's heavy snowstorms in Central France.

The students' task was to write down (in figures) any numbers that they heard - temperatures, depths of snow which had fallen, number of homes deprived of electricity, number of people marooned in a train which got stuck in a snowdrift, and so on.

## ★ Gap-filling

Although gap-filling acquired a bad name for itself some years ago as a result of tedious and meaningless exercises in grammar-translation textbooks, its value is now being recognised again. As a listening activity it has the value of enabling the teacher to direct attention to particular language items, and of compelling close attention to particular parts of a text. If understanding of the text is the main aim it may be appropriate for the gapped version to be in the mother tongue rather than the target language. With *Un ragazzo di Firenze*, (see p 11) for example, the following exercise might be set.

### *Fill in the gaps*

Paolo was _____in Florence, but he hasn't _____ lived there.
He has _____ to the United States in order to _____ ,
and has also visited the United Kingdom - _____ , to be precise.

On the other hand you may want to use the activity to look at the 'how' rather than the 'what' - to give a transcript of the same passage, but omitting the past participles, say, or the names of countries.

There are a number of ways of offering help or guidance to students in different degrees. You might list the missing words at the end of the passage, for instance, perhaps adding some which are **not** heard. Or the length of the missing words could be indicated, by giving a figure for the number of letters it contains or by using the appropriate number of short dashes: 'Paolo was born _ _ Florence'. Once again you

will need to consider whether you wish the students to fill in the gaps **while** the tape is being played - in which case there may need to be pauses after short sections to give them time to think and write - or **after** it has been heard. And in order to give each student precisely the right amount of time this is another activity which is ideally suited to the laboratory.

### *More advanced activities*

Although the activities I have suggested so far have been appropriate for students in the early to intermediate stages of a language course, many of them can be adapted for use with more advanced learners - or even used as they are, where it is the listening passage itself, rather than the activity, which is more demanding. It can be just as valuable for an advanced student as for a beginner to be required to listen closely to a passage: in order to identify all the words indicating a speaker's mood, perhaps, or examples of the use of the subjunctive, or phrases which show the speaker is being ironic.

There are some activities, however, which can be of particular value at a more advanced stage - or indeed which may only be possible at that point - although a word of caution may be in order: confronting students even at this stage with passages more than four or five minutes in length, and expecting close, detailed attention, may be counter-productive. There is of course a need to accustom students to listening to more extended passages, but it should be in order to understand the overall meaning rather than to put it under the linguistic microscope.

## ★ Listening grids

If you make regular use of news broadcasts - either programmes like BBC School Radio's 'Nachrichten und Neuigkeiten', in the series *Deutsch für die Oberstufe*, or newscasts from a radio station's general output, it can save a great deal of preparation time to have a standard grid which students can fill in as they listen, as a precursor to more detailed exploitation. A straightforward version simply requires students to identify the types of news item in the bulletin. The list of types can be as long or short as you wish, and of course some items may fall under more than one heading.

| Type of item | Item 1 | Item 2 | Item 3 | Item 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Political | | | | |
| Diplomatic | | | | |
| Home news | | | | |
| International | | | | |
| Crime | | | | |
| Sport | | | | |
| Human interest | | | | |
| Disaster | | | | |
| Humorous | | | | |
| Other | | | | |

A grid using 'w...' questions is more demanding.

| Who | What? | When? | Where? | Why? | How? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Chancellor Mr Major | announced government's plans for expenditure | in Autumn statement | House of Commons | | |
| Four detectives | facing serious charges | | W Midlands | in connection with police corruption | |
| Ambulance crews | intensified industrial action | | English Midlands | | |
| Lech Walesa | addressed joint session of Congress | | Washington | | |

(*6 o'clock News*, BBC Radio 4, 15 November 1989)

Not all the headings will necessarily be used for every item, of course.

## ★ Give the context/change the context

If students are given a number of keywords, either before a passage is heard, or after a first listening, they can either be required to give the phrase or sentence in which the

keyword occurs, or asked to re-use the keyword in another sentence to show that they have understood it. If the mother tongue is used in language lessons at this stage students could also be asked to give an explanation of the meaning of the keyword and/or of how it is used.

## ☆ Translation

Translation is another linguistic activity which for a time was out of favour. I should emphasise that as an adjunct to listening it is translation into the mother tongue that I have in mind: it is an excellent way of finding out whether a student has understood what s/he has listened to. I should also emphasise, however, that I would not envisage students being required to translate vast sections of what they hear. Often it is useful - and sufficient - to ask for a translation of a few isolated words or short phrases; there will not be many occasions when students need to be asked to translate more than two or three consecutive sentences, and in any case it is probably best to ask for an **equivalent** in the mother tongue rather than a precise, word-for-word translation.

## ★ Re-translation

An activity which has the advantage of directing the learner's attention not only to the text, but also to the target language rather than the mother tongue, is that of re-translation. Here the students are given a number of words, phrases or sentences, and have to search the listening passage for their equivalents. The expressions could even be presented in the target language - making the activity one of paraphrase rather than re-translation - with the added advantage of eliminating the use of the mother tongue during the language lesson.

The activities described in this chapter are certainly not the only ones which can be used to encourage active listening. But they show, I hope, that there is rather more to 'listening comprehension' than having a class hear a complete tape or broadcast, before being subjected to a battery of questions involving factual recall. Developing the habit of careful and active listening provides an indispensable foundation for the skills of speaking and writing, and it is to speaking that we shall now turn our attention.

CHAPTER 3

# *Using audio to develop speaking skills*

When we try to find out in casual conversation if a stranger has a knowledge of a language, the question we usually ask is not *How are your German listening comprehension skills?* or *What is your level of reading ability in Spanish?*, but *Do you* ***speak*** *English/French/Urdu?* or whatever. Most learners come to the study of a new language in the hope and expectation of acquiring at least a grasp - if not a mastery - of its spoken form. What we sometimes forget, however, whatever model of language learning or acquisition we believe in, is just how much language the students must be exposed to before they are able to construct a system which will enable them to operate as autonomous language users.

Audio texts can provide a number of things for the learner: at the simplest level it will be models of pronunciation to be copied, whilst at the most sophisticated level it will combine the content itself with the way in which it is being expressed - once again the 'what' and the 'how'. Students can often be inhibited not so much by the fact of not knowing how to say something as by not having anything to say, and the audio text can meet both needs at the same time.

The important thing to bear in mind when devising speaking activities is the need to ensure progression for the learner from straightforward repetition of what s/he has just heard, via manipulation of the language, to the spontaneous, 'creative' utterances which express what the student wishes or needs to say, rather than what s/he has been manoeuvred by the teacher into saying.

## ★ Repetition

The tape recorder has the virtue of being able to repeat without tiring or changing, as many times as a student requires, utterances which s/he can imitate, and there are several ways of making use of this.

- For whole-class work, the teacher can use the pause button to 'explode' the text and have individuals, groups or class repeat sections of the text, replaying a section if necessary. Some teachers like to re-model the utterance themselves before asking students to repeat it, although it could be argued that this destroys some of the value of hearing the native-speaker in the first place. If the audio text is not clear enough for the student to be able to imitate the speaker without the teacher's intervention, it may not actually be suitable for that particular activity - whatever others it may give rise to. You may wish students to repeat parts of the text only. One way of doing this is to write the phrases or sentences for repetition on the board or the overhead projector: as soon as the students hear a phrase in the list they have to repeat it.

- A good way of keeping a class alert is to say that you are going to stop the tape recorder from time to time and point to a student, who must then repeat the

sentence s/he has just heard. This does put students under a certain amount of pressure, of course, and it may therefore not be an appropriate activity for all groups.

## ★ Echoing

For the more advanced student a repetition activity which can not only sharpen listening skills but also improve fluency is to echo a speaker without the insertion of any pauses in the tape. Having to keep up with what is being said has the effect of concentrating attention on pronunciation and intonation more than on meaning, so this is perhaps most useful at the point when the text has been completely understood and the emphasis is on helping the learner to internalise the pattern of how it **sounds**.

*Here is the news ...*

*Six Federation war ships are heading towards the Empire war zone to join war ships already there to protect merchant shipping in the area.*

*The Federation Ministry of Defence says that three are crossing the Blue Sea and three the Green Sea by way of Ursa. Three of the war ships are over forty years old and are being towed across the Green Sea to save wear and tear on their engines. The journey may take six weeks.*

*The Ministry says that because of its lack of suitable modern ships it is negotiating the purchase of four of Industria's newest war ships. Industria is sending five ships to the war zone as part of the international build-up there.*

(from *How to Listen* by Marion Geddes, BBC English by Radio and TV)

## ★ Prediction

Rather than asking students *What did s/he just say?* it can be very effective to stop the tape and ask *What is s/he going to say next?* The strategy of 'prediction from context' is a vital language skill - one which we all employ in our mother tongue as an aid to processing what we are hearing - and the enjoyment we get from party games such as 'Coffee pot', when one player has to guess the word for which the others substitute 'coffee pot' in as many sentences as possible stems from this. It is a strategy which we do not always help learners to develop with a second language, however, and this activity can give useful practice in building up the skill. It can be done after the text has been heard once or twice, when it is perhaps more accurate to describe it as recall, or for intermediate to advanced students it can be done on a first hearing; in each case the tape is run on to provide confirmation or correction to the students.

It is worth pointing out that as with gap-filling activities (of which this is a sort of aural as opposed to written version) there may be more than one possible way of continuing a sentence, and a student is not necessarily 'wrong' if the speaker actually says something different from what s/he suggested - indeed, with advanced groups this very fact may lead to interesting discussions on why a speaker said what s/he did, and on the different nuances which are conveyed by other possible continuations.

## ★ Questioning by students

Another skill with which we do not always give learners as much help as we might is that of formulating questions, as opposed to answering them. As a first stage, students can be given a series of answers, and asked to give the questions which would produce them. For example,

*M:* *Right. Now, what have I got? Er, some cream here.*
*W:* *OK. Fine.*
*M:* *I could only get single but you didn't actually specify on the list, I think, what you wanted.*
*W:* *Ooh dear! Well I, well I suppose yes I can beat it up with some sugar and egg yolk or something and make it thicker. What else have you got here now?*
*M:* *Strawberries I've got.*
*W:* *Yeah.*
*M:* *But just a few because they were a bit expensive.*
*W:* *How much were they?*
*M:* *These?*
*W:* *Yeah.*
*M:* *Would you believe 40?*
*W:* *Well, all right. OK.*

(from *Learning to Listen* by Alan Maley and Sandra Moulding, CUP)

- *No, he could only get single. (Did the man buy double cream?)*
- *She could beat it up with some sugar and egg yolk. (How could she make the cream thicker?)*
- *Yes, they were a bit expensive. (Were the strawberries dear?)*
- *40, as a matter of fact. (How much did the strawberries actually cost?)*

Once students are used to the kind of questions that can be asked about a text, the next step is to withdraw the support of the suggested answers. On the second hearing of a passage, once the gist has been understood, the tape can be paused from time to time, and students must then put to the teacher questions on the section they have just heard; these may be on the content of the passage, although this need not necessarily be the case, since the idea is to help students develop questioning strategies. Thus *How old is the speaker?* will be as valid as *Did he buy strawberries or apples?* After the teacher has provided model answers to a number of questions, so that the students have an idea of what can be expected as a reply, the questions can then be put to a partner, in pair work, or the class be divided into teams, and points awarded for valid questions and answers, with the teacher arbitrating if there should be any disagreement.

## ★ Questioning by the teacher

As with listening, so with speaking: the technique most widely used - and frequently misused - by teachers is probably that of putting questions to the class after a text has been heard. Again, the main points to ensure are that students have had sufficient practice to be able to manipulate the language with reasonable accuracy, that a greater

premium is not placed on factual recall than can be justified, and that the facts required of the students are relevant rather than trivial. It is all too easy to undermine students' confidence with a series of questions on information which they understood when they heard it, but have not retained because it was not central to the overall meaning of a passage or which they did not realise they would be required to remember, or which they cannot readily express in the target language. There are times when it is helpful, too, if questions can be phrased in such a way that they oblige the student to answer with a full sentence rather than a single word - e.g. *Was it Fred who ordered a double whisky? No, it was George*, rather than *Who ordered a double whisky? George*. Students may also be helped by knowing in advance the questions they will be required to answer, so that their listening is more purposeful, and the tape can be paused at appropriate points to allow them to commit information to memory or even to work out the answers they will subsequently give.

## ★ Synonyms

Students' word-power can be increased, in the *Readers' Digest* phrase, if you stop the tape from time to time and ask them to give a synonym for the last word they heard. (You will need to know the text intimately to be able to stop it at precisely the right moment!). *Give me another word for ..., Comment peut-on dire cela d'une autre façon?, Was heißt auch ...?, Express that idea another way*, all provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge or to extend their vocabulary, and this can also be an introduction to paraphrase work, which we shall look at in the chapter on writing.

## ★ 'Jigsaw' listening

A good way of ensuring that the talking provoked by an audio text is genuinely meaningful is to divide the class into two or more groups, and have each group listen to a different section of the text. The students then regroup in pairs, threes or whatever, in order to find out from each other what their section was about, so that the complete text can be reconstituted in the correct order.

## ★ Detectives

An extension of this is to divide the class into two groups, only one of which hears the text. In pairs, a student who has not heard the text has to question a student who has, and find out as much as s/he can about it. This activity requires students to know a certain amount of language about text types, of course.

e.g. *Student A: 'C'est un bulletin d'informations?'*
*Student B: 'Non'.*
*Student A: C'est un dialogue, alors?'*
*Student B: 'Oui.'*
*Student A: 'Extrait d'une pièce radiophonique?'*
*Student B: 'Oui.'*
*Student A: 'Entre combien de personnages?'*
*Student B: 'Il y a trois participants.'*
*Student A: 'Ce sont des hommes ou des femmes?' etc.*



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## ★ Dialogue cues

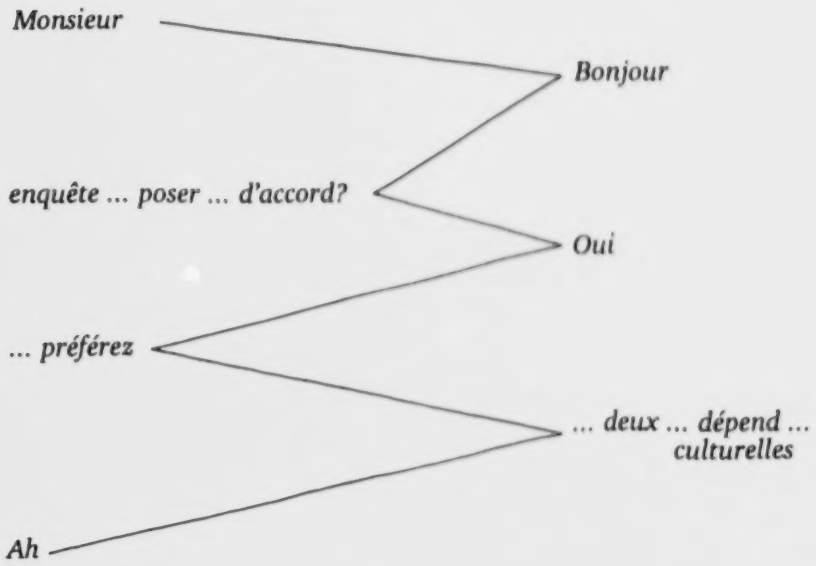
As a way of helping students to memorise language patterns and key vocabulary you can play a dialogue to them two or three times, and then provide them with cues - on the board, on worksheets or on the overhead projector - which will help them to recall it. The tape can then be used as a further prompt, if necessary, or as confirmation that the dialogue has been successfully recalled. These cues take very little time to prepare, but are very effective.

*Dialogue 'Interview de Phillipe'*

- *Bonjour, Monsieur.*
- *Bonjour, Mademoiselle.*
- *Je fais une petite enquête sur les vacances. Alors je voudrais vous poser quelques petites questions. D'accord?*
- *Oui.*
- *Qu'est-ce que vous préférez comme formule de vacances? Les vacances en France ou à l'étranger?*
- *Oh, disons, disons les deux, quoi. Ça dépend si j'ai envie des ... de passer des vacances culturelles ou des vacances de détente.*
- *Ah, trés bien.*

(from *Authentik* Vol 11, No 7)

*Cues*




Even with a relatively complex dialogue this technique makes its reconstruction reasonably easy, and you can then move on to further questions such as *Vous, qu'est-ce*

*que vous auriez répondu?* or *Philippe, qu'est-ce qu'il fait dans la vie?* or *Exprimez d'une autre façon 'vacances de détente'*, and so on.

## ★ Speculation

An activity allied to prediction (see above) is that of speculation, when the tape is stopped part way through, and students are encouraged not just to predict the next word or two, but to say how they think the passage may continue. Students can be invited to suggest how a character might reply to a question, for instance, or what other questions might have been put to him, how other characters might reply to the question, why a character replied in a particular way, and so on. When imagination is given full play like this, it is often surprising how creative the results can be.

## ★ Role play

'Role play' is a term that has come to cover a multitude of activities - and in some cases a multitude of sins. It is important to be clear about whether we are simply requiring students to memorise and recall a dialogue they have heard, or whether we are offering a form of concealed translation exercise, or whether we expect learners to make changes and adaptions to a dialogue, or whether we are asking them to improvise a conversation on the basis of a more or less closely defined situation.

The concealed translation seems to me to have relatively little to recommend it, since it tends to give rise to all the problems that resulted in prose translation falling out of favour - it encourages the view that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the mother tongue and the target language, and generally produces stiff, stilted dialogues, without encouraging students to 'think themselves into' a situation.

The memorisation and recall technique has more to be said for it, so long as we are clear that this is what we are asking learners to do. They can be helped to memorise their side of the conversation either by the use of 'Dialogue cues' (see above), or by working in pairs, when after hearing the dialogue two or three times partner A uses a transcript and prompts partner B; when partner B has learned his or her side of the dialogue by heart, s/he then takes the transcript and prompts partner A.

Adapting a dialogue takes students a step further along the road to being 'creative', but if the activity is to concentrate on speaking rather than writing skills it is probably better not to ask students to work from a transcript after they have heard the text, but for them to use a tape as a starting point. This could either be done as an activity with the whole class, in which you stop the tape after a key word or phrase and ask for an alternative, or as pair work, when a recording of the dialogue in which some of the words have been 'deleted' is used as the prompt for the students. Drawing students' attention in this way to the points at which a dialogue can be adapted is a much more satisfactory - and satisfying - experience than simply saying *Make up another dialogue based on this one*, when they tend to feel that **everything** must be changed.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Marie-Pierre* | *Pardon, mademoiselle. Il y a [une boîte à lettres] près d'ici?* |
| *Passante* | *Oui, il y en a [une] dans la [première] rue à [droite].* |
| *Marie-Pierre* | *Je vous remercie.* |
| *Passante* | *De rien. Je vous en prie.* |

(from *A vous la France!*, BBC Radio)

(The appropriate words can be 'deleted' from the tape by making a copy to a second machine, and turning down the volume on the 'master' machine at the appropriate moments. It is a technique that you may need to practise a little before you are able to judge the precise length of time for which the volume needs to be kept down!)

The most demanding type of role play is that in which students are simply given the outline of a situation and asked to improvise, though it provides the best indication of whether or not they have mastered the language for productive use. The basic situation will be one that is suggested by the audio text, and can range in complexity from, say, having the students imagine they are a tourist and a native and simply asking for and giving directions to a place of their choice, to taking on the persona of a character from a play and reacting to a new situation as they think the character might.

## ★ Change the context

This activity was presented as one to develop listening skills (see above, p 8ff), but if the target language rather than the mother tongue is used it can also provide speaking practice. The teacher gives a keyword, and students must then re-use it or a word derived from it in a different sentence. In the sentence *It was plain that he had lost his way*, the key word chosen might be 'plain'; students might offer *The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain*, *The plain fact was that John loved Mary*, *Amanda was a very plain child* and so on. *The plane took off at five o'clock* would not be allowed!

## ★ Preparation of radio programmes

Recording their own work can give students a great deal of satisfaction, whether it is as a more permanent record of what they have achieved than, for instance, simply performing a role play in front of their classmates, or as a way of ensuring that their work is directed at a specific audience, in the case of material prepared as a resource for another class. An excellent way of giving real purpose to such recording is to have a group work on the preparation of their own 'radio programme'. It is important to ensure that they do not try to be too ambitious in the early stages, but if series such as BBC School Radio's *Branchez-vous!*, *Schalt mal ein!* or *¡Enrollate!*, based on the format of a local radio breakfast magazine, are used as models it is possible to build up to the production of ten or fifteen minute programmes without too much difficulty. It is by no means essential to have access to sophisticated recording or mixing equipment for the activity to be a success, nor is a soundproof studio an absolute necessity: very satisfying results can be obtained in a corner of a classroom with quite modest tape recorders. (Chapter 5 gives advice on the choice of equipment and how to achieve the best results from recordings.)

It is important that the finished programme should be used as a way of emphasising success, and not as evidence of mistakes. Students have made a big investment in it, in psychological terms; some may still be embarrassed at hearing themselves as others do; to have their mistakes held up as an example is a sure way of destroying their self-confidence. *That was a good dialogue, wasn't it* is far more likely to encourage further efforts than pointing out grammatical errors or inaccuracies of pronunciation. Students will in many cases be self-critical enough: a solid foundation of listening practice will have provided them with the skills to realise that their performance falls short of perfection, and to aim for an improvement the next time they carry out the exercise.

CHAPTER 4

# *Using audio to develop writing skills*

Although only a minute proportion of our students are likely to become Joseph Conrads or Samuel Becketts, producing works of literature in a language which is not their mother tongue, there are nonetheless many good reasons for helping them to acquire and practise the skill of writing in the course of their second or foreign language study. It is valuable as a study aid, helping many learners to fix and retain vocabulary and language patterns; it is an essential component of examinations for those with ambitions to continue past the compulsory stage of learning; study skills (such as note-taking, for example) can be transferred to other areas; and for some students it can have real-life applications, whether it be booking holiday accommodation or sending a memo to one's (foreign) colleague.

Writing activities based on audio texts will invariably - inevitably - draw on other skills as well, and it is important to be aware of what the links are, and of the level at which demands in listening, reading or speaking are being made of the learner. As in the two previous chapters, the activities described here are arranged as far as possible in increasing order of difficulty. At their simplest they will demand little more than accurately copying a few words - at their most demanding they will require of the student the 'creative' use of language.

Several of the activities suggested in Chapter 2 can be adapted to emphasise the aspect of writing rather than listening. Obvious ones are ordering and sequencing, in which a mixed-up text must be written in the right order; matching questions with their answers or the beginnings and ends of sentences; writing out the true (but not the false) statements based on a text; listing the words in a particular category, and so on.

## ★ Question and assisted answer

The aim at this stage should be to enable students to write words or short phrases accurately, imitating a model they can see - a kind of written version of the oral activity of repetition. No calls are made on long-term memory, on ability to manipulate the language, on compositional skills: this is simple copywriting. Answers to questions on an audio text are given to the learners, whose task is to identify the correct one and write it down. The answers can be set out in the wrong order, in which case the students will simply have to choose the appropriate one for each question, or they can be presented in multiple choice form.

### *Booking a hotel room*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Client:* | *Bonjour madame.* |
| *Réceptionniste:* | *Bonjour monsieur.* |
| *Client:* | *Vous avez une chambre pour ce soir?* |
| *Réceptionniste:* | *Oui, pour combien de personnes monsieur?* |
| *Client:* | *Pour deux personnes.* |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Réceptionniste:* | *Vous désirez un grand lit, ou deux lits?* |
| *Client:* | *Deux lits, s'il vous plait.* |
| *Réceptionniste:* | *Avec bain ou cabinet de toilette monsieur?* |
| *Client:* | *Avec cabinet de toilette.* |
| *Réceptionniste:* | *Oui, c'est pour combien de nuits, monsieur?* |
| *Client:* | *Pour trois nuits.* |

(from *Get by in French*, BBC Radio)

Choose the correct answer for each question and write it down on a separate piece of paper.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. *Le client désire une chambre pour ce soir?* | *(a) Oui, pour ce soir.*<br>*(b) Non, pour demain soir.* |
| 2. *C'est une chambre pour une personne?* | *(a) Oui, pour une personne.*<br>*(b) Non, pour deux personnes.* |
| 3. *Il désire un grand lit ou deux lits?* | *(a) Il désire un grand lit.*<br>*(b) Il désire deux lits.* |

etc.

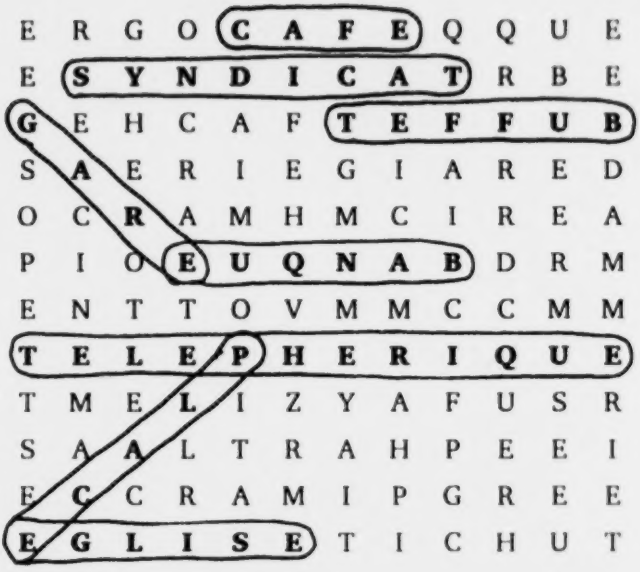
Another way of providing assistance is to give answers in which some of the words are incomplete, so that the largest part of the students' task consists of copy-writing, but one or two words in each sentence have to be correctly recalled and written. For the same dialogue, for example, the answers might be given as follows:

*Il veut une ch---re avec c-b-n-t de t--le--e.*
*C'est pour tr--- n---s.*
*Le prix de la cham--- est de c--- fr--c-.*

## ★ Wordsquares and crosswords

The number of people who buy puzzle magazines for bus or train journeys testifies to the popularity of activities involving the identification of words in a jumble of letters, and the principle that an activity which seems to be a game is more likely to motivate learners than one which feels like work is a useful one to follow. The word search is an excellent application of this principle.

Example Heading: e.g. *A vous la France!*
This word square contains ten words for places you might want to ask the way to: you heard them used in the dialogues in Unit 1 of *A vous la France!* Find the words and write them out.

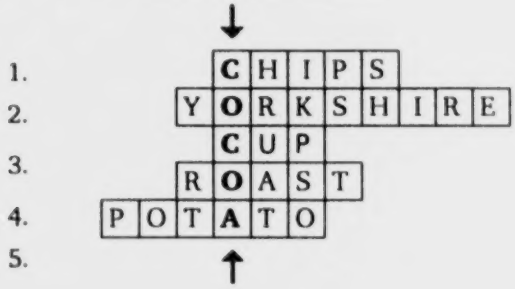

E R G O C A F E Q Q U E
E S Y N D I C A T R B E
G E H C A F T E F F U B
S A E R I E G I A R E D
O C R A M H M C I R E A
P I O E U Q N A B D R M
E N T T O V M M C C M M
T E L E P H E R I Q U E
T M E L I Z Y A F U S R
S A A L T R A H P E E I
E C C R A M I P G R E E
E G L I S E T I C H U T

Crosswords are another enjoyable way of helping learners with the early stages of writing - and for this purpose they certainly do not need to aspire to the complexity of the *Times* with its cryptic clues. They can also be combined with hidden words, to make an acrostic.

### *Food, glorious food . . .*

The missing words from these typically English dishes will give you a bedtime drink in the line downwards.

1. Fish and _____
2. _____ pudding.
3. _____ of tea.
4. _____ beef and 2 across.
5. Mashed _____



Clues can be given in a variety of ways: missing words, as in the last example, definitions (in mother tongue or target language), translations, and so on. Students too, perhaps working in pairs, can be asked to make up this type of word grid, with its clues, and when these have been checked by the teacher they can be handed on to another pair to be solved.

## ★ Gapped transcripts

Requiring students to write in the missing words in a transcript of an audio text is, as I suggested above [p 17], a useful way of drawing attention to particular language features - orthography, morphology, syntax and lexis can all be put under the spotlight as required. As before, you may find it useful to provide guidance by means of a list of the missing words - perhaps adding a few extra words which are similar in sound or spelling to those which have been omitted - and, as for listening, the same considerations apply about the point at which you first of all hand out the gapped text, and then get the students to complete it.

## ★ Dictations

Dictation no longer features - thank goodness - as an element of public examinations: we are aware of how artificial an exercise it was to expect students to write down a far-fetched anecdote, awkwardly divided into segments. But the virtues of dictation remain: it demonstrates learners' ability to make sense of what they hear and to show their knowledge of how those sounds are represented in writing. As an activity based on audio texts it is probably better for the teacher to dictate single words, short phrases or single sentences rather than longer passages. In this way there is less risk of distorting intonation patterns and the test is less one of memory than of ability to represent sounds by their conventional written forms.

It is best to play the text once or twice for orientation; the words or phrases are then dictated, and the text is played once again at the end so that the 'native' model is the one that remains with the students.

## ★ Correcting discrepancies

This is the logical extension of the *identification of discrepancies* described in Chapter 2 [p 11]: rather than simply marking the differences between the amended transcript and the audio text, students must correct the former so that it corresponds accurately with what was said. As before, this is probably best done in the laboratory, or at least in groups of two or three with a student in charge of the pause and rewind controls, to take account of different speeds of working. The audio text should not be more than one or two minutes in length: at a normal speech rate of 120-150 words per minute this will give students plenty of material to work on.

## ★ Script completion

We looked in Chapter 3 at *prediction* [p 22] and *speculation* [p 26]. These can form the basis of interesting written activities, at a variety of levels. For beginners and

intermediate students the tape can be paused from time to time: they are then invited to write down what they think the next word or phrase will be, and their suggestions are confirmed or corrected when the tape is restarted. For more advanced learners the activity consists in the tape being stopped at the end of a scene or section: the students must then continue the script from that point. Pair or group discussion is a useful way of helping students whose powers of imagination may be stretched by this exercise, and collaboration on the writing, too, may be a good way of reducing the frustration quotient for students whose command of the written language may not be their strongest point.

As this is a relatively demanding exercise it may be as well to carry it out once or twice as a whole class activity, with plenty of teacher support, before expecting students to cope with it by themselves.

## ★ Paraphrase

An extension of the *synonym* work suggested in Chapter 3 [p 24] is to have students create a parallel script based on the original. They can be asked collectively during a first hearing or two to suggest alternative ways in which ideas can be expressed, before going off to work individually or in pairs on their paraphrases. As with so many writing activities based on audio texts, this has the virtue of not placing excessive demands on the learners' imagination: the basic framework is there, and need only be clothed in language which they already have at their disposal. For advanced students it will be possible to use a variety of text types, from newscast to drama; for less advanced learners the interview format, provided the answers are reasonably short, is one which offers interesting scope, as it will not involve too many characters, and will usually follow a fairly clear line of development.

### *The rising cost of living*

*(original version)*

*Paulette:* *And do you find it hard to make your housekeeping money go round?*

*Elizabeth:* *I can't make my housekeeping money go round. I'm losing ground all the time because the prices go up and up and up. It's beyond reason. Every time you go something has gone up. They don't put it up one or two pennies, they put it up about four or five pennies at a time.*

*Paulette:* *Mmm. What do you think has gone up most lately?*

*Elizabeth:* *Well, of course, our staple diet ... we used to always have one good meat meal a day. Well, meat is an absolute luxury now.*

(from *Listen, then*, P Møller and A Bollinger, Munksgaard, Denmark)

### *The rising cost of living*

*(paraphrase)*

*Paulette:* *And is it difficult to buy all you need with the money you set aside for it?*

*Elizabeth:* *I can't manage to buy all I need with it. I can never keep up because the cost of living just goes on rising. It's hopeless. Whenever you visit the shops*

*the prices have risen. And it's not by a small amount, it's by a significant amount each time.*

*Paulette:* *Uhuh. Which are the things which have increased most recently?*

*Elizabeth:* *Well, obviously, what we eat all the time ... we used to be in the habit of eating one decent meal - beef, pork or chicken, say - each day. Well, that's something we can only afford on really special occasions now.*

## ★ Dialogue adaptations

This again transfers to the written mode an activity described in Chapter 3 (p 26), and provides students with a framework for their efforts so that the demands placed on them can be matched to the stage they have reached. The model dialogue indicates the words or phrases which the students are to change.

*En la tienda de ultramarinos*

*Señora:* *Buenos dias, señor. Deseo un poco de vino.*

*Empleado:* *Si, señora. Ciento veinticinco pesetas el litro.*

*Señora:* *Ciento veinticinco pesetas el litro. Si, pues, ¿me da usted dos litros, por favor?*

*Empleado:* *Gracias.*

(from *Get by in Spanish*, BBC Radio)

## ★ Transcription

This seems to me to be a much more satisfactory way than dictation of encouraging students to listen closely to a text which is to be reproduced in written form. To begin with, it ensures that what the learner hears is always precisely the same, in pronunciation, intonation and speed, however many times it may be repeated - and these speech patterns, moreover, are the natural ones of continuous discourse rather than the distortions which are inevitable in the very process of dictation. Experience has shown that transcription works very well as a homework activity (see p 41 for some points relating to the use of personal cassette players.)

As with other intensive activities it is important not to expect students to transcribe too long a segment of text - one to two minutes in the earlier stages, and certainly no more than four or five, even for advanced students. It is also as well to avoid passages in which speakers overlap, as this can make for unnecessary difficulty. I still remember with shame the occasion when, as a young and inexperienced lecturer, I confronted a group of trainee teachers with a twenty minute unedited actuality recording of an interviewer talking to the inhabitants of Orléans, and asked them to transcribe all of it - complete with um's, er's and hesitations! Looking back on it I am not sure what is more embarrassing: to have required them to do it in the first place, or to have taken so long, watching their anguish, to realise that the task was completely unreasonable. My only defence is that they were in a language laboratory, and each student was working at her own pace. This horror story points up another aspect of transcription, which is that it is normally advisable for the text to be one on which students have already done some work, rather than coming to it completely unprepared. The benefits of the activity



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are considerable, however, in helping to sharpen up listening skills, in developing an awareness of grammatical accuracy and (where spontaneous, unscripted speech is concerned) in bringing home to students the way in which sentences may begin again after a false start, or be left hanging in the air.

## ★ Identify the phrase

This is, in a sense, selective transcription: students are given a number of translations (or paraphrases in the target language) of sections of the text; they must listen to the text, identify the segment in question, and write it out.

## ★ Retranslation

Once students are familiar with a text, it can be useful to provide them with an adapted version in the mother tongue. Retranslation of this version into the target language allows them to draw on the language they have encountered in the original text, and this is much more likely to lead to accurate and free-flowing use of language than the traditional translation of an unseen passage.

## ★ Consecutive translation

For advanced students a demanding but profitable activity is to let them hear a fairly short text - a minute to a minute and a half or so is about right, and news items lend themselves well. You prepare in advance a short summary in the mother tongue, which you dictate to the students, who must write a consecutive translation of it. This has the advantage, like the last activity, of leading them towards language they have already heard.

## ★ Note-taking

Anything which helps to develop transferable skills is valuable, and note-taking is a skill which has obvious applications not only in the context of school or college, but also in the world of work, apart from its intrinsic value as a way of building up speed and accuracy of writing, and of picking out the salient points of a text.

Factual material is usually the most suitable for providing note-taking practice - news bulletins are an ideal source of pieces which are of manageable length, and documentary features such as those found in BBC School Radio's *Deutscher Club, Horizons de France, Deutsch für die Oberstufe* or *Voix de France* provide a wealth of material for more advanced students.

A three or four minute sequence provides an appropriate amount of material. Play the passage first to give the students an idea of its overall shape and content, and then, on a second playing, stop the tape from time to time so that they have time to write; the text can then be played a third time to provide reinforcement, and give an opportunity to check what has been written. The students are then given time to sort out their ideas and to rewrite their notes legibly and in a structured format.

When it come to marking the notes students have taken, it is useful to score three aspects of their work - not only linguistic accuracy and accuracy of information (the

'what' and the 'how' once again) but also the way the notes have been set out, as an encouragement to students to consider whether the notes would still make sense if they looked at them again after an interval of time, and to take into account the effect that presentation can have on the effectiveness of a piece of writing.

On the first two or three occasions on which note-taking is introduced it is helpful to work with the whole class on the production of an agreed version of what could be written: if students are not aware of what is expected of them we should not be too surprised if they fail to match our expectations!

## ★ Summaries

While note-taking can be used as an activity in its own right, it can also serve as a stage in the preparation of a summary, where the notes are used as a basis for a piece of connected prose which expresses the salient points of the original text. It is important, at least on the first few occasions when a summary is attempted, to provide learners with adequate support, by suggesting key words to be incorporated, for example, or by deciding collectively on which points must be included and which can be omitted, or even by providing a model summary.

## ★ Essay writing

Essays are in themselves a conventional enough way of enabling students to demonstrate their command of the written language: all the exercises, practice, training and rehearsal are now behind the student, who at last has the chance to express the ideas s/he chooses in the language of his or her choice. That can throw up its own problems, though. I can remember vividly the occasions when, as a student, I sat in front of a blank sheet of paper wondering not so much how to say what I wanted, but what on earth there might be to say about the subject in the first place. Documentary broadcasts in particular, and more generally any kind of 'feature' programme, can provide students who are short of ideas with either a framework for their own efforts or with sufficient starting points to enable them to strike out in other directions, as well as offering models of the ways in which ideas can be expressed, say, or of the language of argument or persuasion.

## ★ Script writing

In the context of the exploitation of a broadcast, the creation of a script for their own programme which they can then record provides students not only with a logical finishing point, a culmination of their efforts, but also with a very satisfying one. The sense of achievement they can obtain from listening eventually to their own programme is a considerable one, and this is likely to be enhanced still more if they know that their recording may be used by other classes, or 'broadcast' on the school or college public address system if it has one. It may be possible to arrange an exchange of such material with a twin school, and from time to time BBC School Radio even includes in some of its language series a programme made up of contributions from listeners. The range of possibilities is enormous - from newscast to phone-in, from dramatised sketch to documentary feature. A magazine format is ideal for elementary and intermediate

students, since it can contain a selection of quite short items contributed by individuals or small groups, while advanced classes can be more ambitious and aim at something rather more sustained, such as a feature on a topic they have been studying.

In this chapter I have referred throughout to 'writing' and 'written work'. However, microcomputers and word processors are being more and more widely used in schools and colleges, and almost all of the activities I have suggested will be just as effective on word processors: some, indeed, may even work better. A companion title in this series discusses the application of Information Technology to the language classroom and explores in more detail the activities which they make possible, including some of those described here. (*Making the most of IT skills* by Sue Hewer)

## Note

As I have already pointed out, the separation of the activities described in Chapters 2-4 into listening, speaking and writing has been partly for clarity, and partly so that teachers can ensure that all the skills receive adequate attention. It is unlikely, however (and even undesirable) that in a given lesson only one skill area will be dealt with. Not only do some of the activities I have suggested call on more than one skill, but teachers will in any case wish to ensure that there is variety in the course of a lesson and that their approach is therefore an integrated one.

CHAPTER 5

# *Managing the system*

We turn now from pedagogical considerations to those of organisation. Because institutions vary so much, in size, in layout, in the importance they attach to resource-based learning, in the finances available, in the way in which responsibilities are allocated and so on, it is impossible to lay down hard and fast rules for the best way of organising the use of these resources. In my experience, however, there is one essential minimum: if there is no overall school or college policy for their use there must at least be one which has been agreed by the language department itself. The reasons for using audio materials, the types of materials to be used, and the ways in which they are integrated with other teaching and learning resources are a matter for discussion by the staff involved, and should preferably be not only committed to paper as part of the departmental scheme of work but also reviewed at regular intervals.

Some of the points made in this chapter may seem obvious: even if you have already taken them into account, however, it may still be useful to consider whether there are alternative ways of managing the use of audio, and whether your system still meets the needs of students and staff in what may be a changed - or changing - situation, as a result of local financial management, for instance, or because of National Curriculum requirements.

## ★ Basic equipment

It is a truism to say that 'you get what you pay for'; the prime consideration for any piece of equipment, however, is that it should do the job required of it and be capable of standing up to the kind of use it will receive. You will be faced in many cases with a choice between equipment designed for domestic use and that which has been made specifically for the educational market: while the latter may in some cases seem to be more expensive, its greater robustness or the fact that items such as time switches may be integral features rather than needing to be provided separately may well make it a more sensible purchase in the long term.

## ★ Radios

Radio receivers or tuners must clearly be capable of picking up the stations from which you wish to record; conversely, there is no point in going for a four wave-band set if you only intend to use BBC Schools Radio - currently broadcast on FM only, although there are plans to transfer some of the output to MW from the autumn of 1990. Radios do vary in their sensitivity, and in the case of receivers offering more than one wave-band the sensitivity may be greater or less for some wave-bands than others, so you should make sure that the equipment you choose will provide you with as strong and 'clean' a signal as possible.

If the radio is kept in a central recording area, and not moved around, there may be no point in having one with built-in amplifier and/or loudspeakers: a socket for

headphone monitoring, or the attachment of a small loudspeaker with built-in amplification, should be sufficient. If the radio has to be used in classrooms, however, then considerations of sturdiness and portability will need to be taken into account, together with provision for a loudspeaker system that will be suitable for class use.

It is of the utmost importance that recordings made from broadcasts should be of the highest possible quality: top class playback machines and perfect listening conditions cannot improve a poor recording, and for this reason it is well worth investing in the best radio you can afford, making sure that an external aerial is used if necessary. Information on the selection and operation of this and other equipment for teaching and learning is given in USPECs (User Specifications) published by the Council for Education Technology (see list of Useful Addresses, p 49).

## ★ Recorders

The first decision to be taken is whether to use a cassette or open-reel system for making your recordings. For ease of use, convenience of storage and simplicity of copying the cassette wins hands down. However, if you intend to do any editing more complex than that which is possible by simply dubbing from one cassette to another then you will need to consider the advantages of working with open-reel tape: the possibilities are greatly extended, and open-reel facilities may be essential if you plan to make your own live recordings - of classroom or 'studio' performances, for example, or of interviews carried out either in school or on location. Professional broadcasters usually collect material nowadays on high-quality cassette recorders, transferring it to open-reel tape for the subsequent editing.

Whether the recorder is combined with the radio is to a certain extent a matter of choice; this choice will be affected by whether the installation is fixed or whether portability is a requirement, and by whether you also need to record from other sources, such as a record or CD player. This may also affect the number of recorders you will require.

*Audio-active cassette recorder*

Some educational models of cassette radios are fitted with timers; if not, an electronic time-switch will be an essential piece of equipment. Even if all your recordings are made during normal working hours the use of a time-switch is more reliable than depending on somebody's being on the spot to start the recorder, whilst BBC School Radio's night-time transmissions or the taping of material from overseas radio stations will mean that equipment has to be switched on after staff have gone off duty.

Some points to look for when choosing a time-switch are:

- digital setting (more accurate than a dial)
- more than one setting possible in 24 hour period; ideally the possibility of eight-day programming (such as is offered on videocassette recorders.)
- tape recorder **must** remain switched to 'record' mode even if mains power is off: some machines have a device which protects rollers and pinch-wheels by releasing them if the machine has no mains power.

For classroom recordings - of student work, for example, a cassette recorder with built-in condenser microphone may be adequate, but much better results are likely to be obtained with an external microphone.

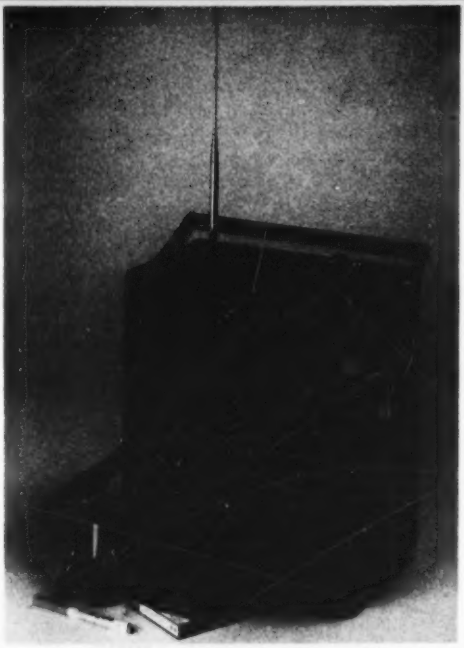
There are several books which give advice on how to make recordings (see Suggestions for further reading, p 54); it is not possible to go into detail here, but there are a few simple steps you can take to get good results with basic equipment.

- always make sure that record heads are kept clean: commercially available cleaning cassettes will be better than nothing, although they are slightly abrasive; better to use cotton-wool buds and methylated spirit if the heads are accessible.
- make sure there are as few hard, reflective surfaces as possible in your recording area: microphones, unlike the human ear, will not filter out unwanted echoes; curtains, coats hung up on chairs, even a couple of cushions on the table near the microphone, will make a big difference.
- if your recorder has a recording level meter make sure that the recording volume is as high as possible without going over into the 'red'.
- make a test recording to check voice levels.
- speak **over** the microphone rather than **into** it, from a distance of 8-12inches if possible.

## ★ Playback machines

Once again the choice of playback machines is almost unlimited. The points to be considered are:

- 'domestic' or educational? The latter may be more expensive, but better fitted to withstand the rigours of classroom use.
- mono or stereo? Some BBC School Radio programmes are now made in stereo, and even mono broadcasts may sound better on stereo equipment.
- built-in or external loudspeaker(s)? If the former, the power and sound must be adequate for classroom use; the latter are on the whole more likely to provide a satisfactory listening experience for the student.
- accessibility of controls? Many educational machines are designed so that the loudspeaker can be directed at the class, but with controls that do not oblige the teacher to turn her back on the students.
- portable or fixed? Security may be a consideration here, though funds may not run to a fixed installation in every language classroom.



*Radio cassette recorder with amplifier*

- type of digital tape position indicator? The alternatives are

(i) a system which shows either tape length consumed or tape time;

(ii) a system giving a numerical read-out which has no constant relationship with either tape length or tape time.

The first type is the more accurate, and is useful if you are likely to be running backwards and forwards frequently in a tape; it tends to be available only on the more expensive machines, however.

In addition to machines for use with a whole class there is the question of whether to provide equipment for group listening. (The advantages and disadvantages of language laboratories are dealt with in a later section of this chapter.) Many of the activities described above in chapters 2-4 will be most effective if they are carried out by groups rather than by a whole class, and this will require the provision of playback machines which can be fitted with headsets rather than (or capable of cutting out) an internal loudspeaker, so that other students are not disturbed. Even one machine of this type, with outlets for four or six pairs of headphones, will add valuable flexibility, while four or five should enable all the members of a class to take part simultaneously in group activities. The tape player does not need to be terribly sophisticated, but, given the type of work for which it will be used, should certainly be one which is fitted with a reasonably accurate tape counter.

## ★ Editing equipment

You may or may not think of this as a basic requirement. If you expect to do a significant amount of editing, however, it will be important to choose a machine of professional or near-professional quality, if only because it will have been designed to give access to record and playback heads, so that the tape can be accurately marked for cutting. It will also offer a tape speed of at least 7½ inches per second so that words can easily be separated from each other.

*Headphone distribution box*

## ★ Loan pool for students

With the proliferation of the personal cassette player, the vital role of listening can be emphasised by the setting of audio homework assignments. However, so that individual students who happen not to possess one are not put at a disadvantage it may be necessary to provide a small departmental stock which can be borrowed overnight. (It is also worth bearing in mind that the family cassette-radio or music centre may not always be available to a student, or may not be in a room in which a student can work without interruption.) You may feel, of course, that a 'walkman' is only too likely to do precisely that! However, its attractiveness as a possession - and this goes for any tempting item of electrical equipment - can be greatly reduced if it is engraved with the name of the establishment or marked with unsightly but identifiable 'security paint' - usually bright yellow - which will allow it to be traced back to its rightful owner. Ultra-violet markers are a less effective deterrent, since they are not immediately obvious to would-be thieves.

## ★ Points to bear in mind

We have looked at what may be thought of as a basic minimum in the way of facilities if audio resources are to play their part in the teaching and learning process. Their effectiveness can be greatly enhanced if the following points are also taken into account.

- **Listening conditions**. The best recording can be wasted if the students cannot hear it - and turning up the volume may only result in distortion. The importance of optimum listening conditions cannot be too highly stressed - not least because it is a mark of consideration for the students, and an acknowledgement of the demands we are making of them. The average classroom, with its proliferation of highly reflective surfaces, (marker board, windows, tables, walls) is an acoustic disaster zone. Carpeting should be regarded not as a luxury but as an essential way not only of improving a room's acoustics but also of deadening the noise of students moving around within it; acoustic treatment of walls and/or ceilings, and curtains at the windows, may also be necessary.
  Wall-mounted loudspeakers will improve the sound quality obtained from all but the best playback machines, and even a free-standing speaker can enhance the quality of sound to a considerable extent. A projection screen and OHP should be standard equipment and any remaining chalkboards in language classrooms should immediately be replaced by dry-marker whiteboards, since nothing shortens the life of tapes and tape-recorders more than chalk dust.

- **Flexibility.** Much greater flexibility is possible if the language classroom is fitted not with conventional desks or tables but with listening equipment arranged round the walls: the Strathclyde PALE system (see page 2) is an excellent example, combining a wall-mounted loudspeaker for class listening with modified cassette recorders which can be controlled and operated by the students. Each one can accommodate up to four students and has no internal loudspeaker but can be heard only via the headset(s) plugged into it. This

allows the central area of the classroom to be used with some furniture for written work, for example, or permits space to be kept free for role play or other activities where a certain amount of freedom of movement is necessary.

- **Technical Services.** The availability of a technician (or a non-teaching assistant) can make an enormous difference to the effectiveness of an audio resource bank, even if his or her services are shared with other departments. If repair and maintenance of equipment are not part of such a person's duties, or if there is no central arrangement by the local education authority, then a maintenance contract with a supplier will be virtually essential. Copying - and it should be standard practice to keep back-up copies of master tapes, even if the plastic tabs of cassettes are broken out to avoid accidental erasure - will be another valuable task the technician can carry out, and it is worth considering at this point whether the provision of multiple copies of the tapes for student use justifies the purchase of a professional fast copier, or whether this can be done with a domestic twin-deck machine or in the language laboratory if there is one. If students have personal tapes on which assignments are recorded, or if significant numbers of tapes are used over and over again, it will probably also be worth investing in a bulk eraser. (I once had a colleague who thought for a long time that this device was called a 'bulky razor': did he really think that tapes needed to be shaved?)

- The running of the tape library (which is also likely to contain video tapes, of course) is another task which scarcely justifies the use of a member of the teaching staff, but can form part of the technician's duties.

- **Finance**. It may appear obvious, but it is important not to overlook the costs involved in running an audio resource bank.

  To start with, capital outlay is not a once-and-for-all expense: even the best-maintained equipment does not last indefinitely, and provision must be made for its replacement. If you have not negotiated a maintenance contract then money must be set aside for routine as well as emergency repairs: the lack of funds for this purpose led to many a language laboratory which had been installed with pride in the 60s being abandoned in frustration in the 70s. Tapes are a consumable item and one on which it is unwise to economise. Incidentally, cheap tapes are not only likely to break and jam tape transport mechanisms, but tend to shed oxide particles, leading to the need for more frequent cleaning of tape heads. And finally there is the print support which may be required: teacher's notes, tape transcripts, students' workbooks or worksheets and so on, not to mention material intended for photocopying or support materials produced within the department.

- **Security**. I have referred to engraving and the use of security paint. The choice of educational rather than domestic equipment may have the added advantage that it is less attractive and therefore less likely to be stolen, but there will almost certainly need to be provision for secure storage of radios, cassette recorders and so on, whether in a central servicing area, the departmental office or store-room, or simply in classrooms. Many schools find that security lockers

are a worthwhile investment, particularly since it can be difficult and expensive - if not impossible - to arrange insurance on electronic equipment.

## *Systems*

However good your collection of tapes may be, they will not be used if you cannot quickly and easily find the one you want: time spent on devising and maintaining an efficient system for the storage and retrieval of tapes is a most worthwhile investment.

## ★ Storage and retrieval

The main point to bear in mind is that master tapes should be kept completely separate from the copies which are in day-to-day use; you may also wish to have different arrangements for tapes to which students have access and those which are used only by staff. Some institutions also find it helpful to have separate storage of commercial tapes and of recorded broadcasts, since in some cases the latter are re-cycled regularly - for reasons of topicality, perhaps, or to comply with former copyright requirements.

In addition to the tapes themselves, space must be found for associated print support: it is essential that recordings can be quickly and easily matched up with the relevant teachers' notes, course-book, worksheets or whatever. One possibility is to store tape and print together in a wallet or box-file: this has the advantage that a report form can be attached, on which staff can comment on the good or bad points of the tape, or indicate the group with which it has been used. It is also well worth having some means - a card, say, slipped into the space from which an item has been taken - of indicating who has borrowed a particular tape.

## ★ Cataloguing

This is another time-consuming activity, but one which will pay dividends. Simple or complex, the *sine qua non* is that tapes should be labelled the moment - or even **before** - they are recorded: nothing is more tedious than having to listen to them again in order to identify what is on them. Most institutions find it helpful to use a system which shows at least:

- ★ The language of the recording (coded by letter or colour);
- ★ The series title;
- ★ The programme title (and number if appropriate);
- ★ The length of the recording.

This information should appear not only on the tape itself and the tape box, but also in the catalogue. It may also be useful for the catalogue to allow identification not only of whole programmes but also of relevant sections of programmes. A note of classes with whom the tape has been used may also be included.

## A Typical catalogue entry

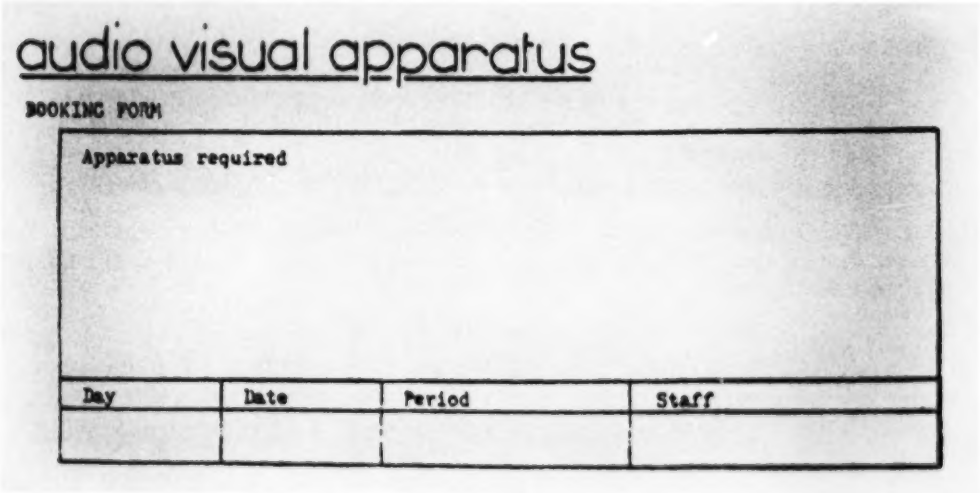
| | |
|---|---|
| F 132 | BRANCHEZ-VOUS! (BBC School Radio) |
| C 60 | Side A: Programme 4 (28 minutes)<br>Side B: Programme 5 (28 minutes) |
| (Recorded off air 15 & 16 Nov 1988 | Radio 4 FM) |
| Programme Type: | Magazine (in style of local radio breakfast show) |
| Content: | Prog 4. Intro 35"<br>Birthdays 25"<br>News headlines 1' 10"<br>Weather 30"<br>Shopping basket 1' 30"<br>Song, (Tramway Terminus Nord, by Jean Guidoni) 2'35"<br>etc etc |
| Topics: | Talking about oneself (names)<br>Weather<br>Shopping<br>Sport<br>etc etc |
| Support materials | Teachers' Notes - transcripts and worksheets Department<br>worksheets - sequencing (L)<br>- role play (S)<br>- wordsearch (W)<br>OHP's - dialogue cues (S)<br>- wordsearch solution |
| Links with course Books | Tricolore 1, Unit 8 - weather<br>Unit 11 - shopping<br>Unit 17 - sports<br>etc etc |

Used with:

| Class/Group | Date | Comment | Initials |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 ER | 5/4/89 | Weather forecast useful; Song fell flat | AB |
| 4 JL | 21.V.89 | "Shopping basket" led to good parallel scripts | CR |
| etc | etc | etc | |

## ★ Booking

Competition for limited resources - be they equipment, materials or staff time - will mean that some kind of booking system will be needed. Printed forms are probably the simplest and most effective way of doing this, like these examples from a large comprehensive school in West Yorkshire.

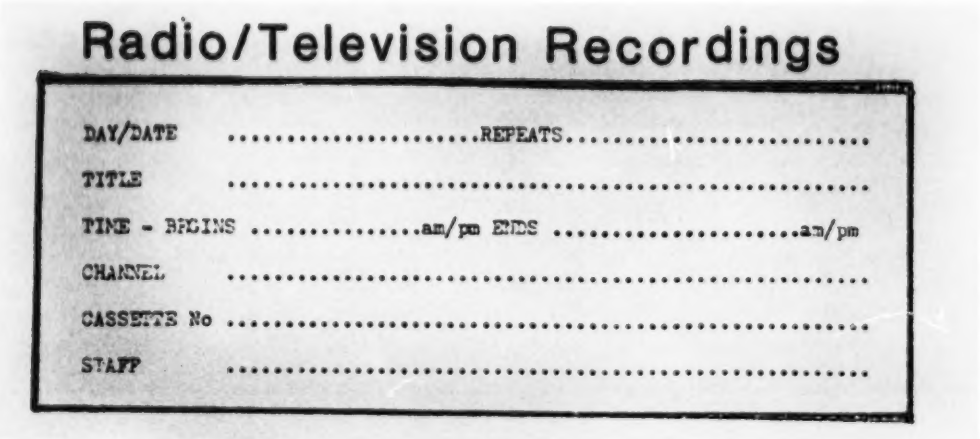


audio visual apparatus

BOOKING FORM

Apparatus required

| Day | Date | Period | Staff |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |



Radio/Television Recordings

DAY/DATE .....REPEATS.....

TITLE .....

TIME - BEGINS .....am/pm ENDS .....am/pm

CHANNEL .....

CASSETTE No .....

STAFF .....

## Equipment fault report

| EQUIPMENT | | RESOURCES No |
|---|---|---|
| FAULT REPORT | | |
| DAY | DATE | REPORTED BY | CONDITION WHEN COLLECTED |
| | | | |

The technician stipulates a deadline for the booking of playback equipment, but then displays a master sheet which shows times when it is unbooked, so that last-minute requests are still possible.

| WEEK COMM. | | T.Time | 1 and 2 | 3 and 4 | Lunch | 5 and 6 | 7 and 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | Room 56 | | | | | | |
| O | Lab 13 | | | | | | |
| N | Science | | | | | | |
| T | Room 56 | | | | | | |
| U | Lab 13 | | | | | | |
| E | Science | | | | | | |
| W | Room 56 | | | | | | |
| E | Lab 13 | | | | | | |
| D | Science | | | | | | |
| T | Room 56 | | | | | | |
| H | Lab 13 | | | | | | |
| U | Science | | | | | | |
| F | Room 56 | | | | | | |
| R | Lab 13 | | | | | | |
| I | Science | | | | | | |

### ★ Self-access

There will be occasions when students need access to listening facilities other than in taught lessons - supported self-study, autonomous learning, flexible study, the setting of

'homework' assignments, even voluntary listening at lunch time or in private study periods will all require not only the provision of equipment but also a system which enables the appropriate tapes and support materials to be available. It may be best to link such work to the library, setting up a number of 'listening posts' at which students can work without disturbing others; a less satisfactory alternative is to have spare listening positions available in classrooms or learning laboratories, although there is more potential in that case for the disruption of lessons.

## *Language laboratories*

The full-scale, conventional, fixed language laboratory does meet certain needs, but given the high cost of installation its advantages and drawbacks need to be very carefully weighed up.

- For:
  - all students can work in privacy
  - teacher can monitor all students
  - all students can record and play back their work as individuals
  - students can work at their own speed once the 'programme' has been recorded on their machines
  - teacher can control student machines
- Against:
  - high cost
  - layout reduces flexibility of use of room
  - feeling that expensive machinery must 'earn its keep' can lead to its being used when other activities would be more appropriate
  - unsupervised 'self-access' use can be difficult
  - some students find it impersonal and 'dehumanising'

If you decide that a laboratory is necessary, at least you are not faced by the crowds of manufacturers who existed in the 1960's. When the representative comes to call, however, there are some common sense questions which need to be answered, apart from the obvious ones of cost and delivery time.

★ **Facilities** - What programme inputs are provided, and are there as many (and only as many) as you need?. (Can the sound from a video programme be fed into student booths, for example?) Can extra inputs be added later on, if required?

- What can the students do?
  - listen?
  - respond?
  - record?
  - playback?
  - call teacher?
  - is all this possible for groups as well as for individuals?
  - how flexible can groups be?
- what can the teacher do?
  - control students' machines?
  - monitor?
  - talk to individuals?
  - talk to groups?

- how 'user friendly' is the laboratory, for students and teachers?

★ **Reliability** - what proof is there for claims of reliability?
- in case of breakdown, how quickly can repairs be carried out?
- are spares readily available/reasonably priced?.

★ **Maintenance** - is a maintenance contract available?
- if so, does it offer preventative service as well as repairs in case of breakdown?
- is any maintenance by your own staff possible/desirable/permissible/essential?

## *Alternatives to the language laboratory*

If the facilities offered by a full-blown laboratory are not essential there are a number of alternative possibilities. I have already referred to the PALE system, where the main requirement is for playback facilities; this could usefully be supplemented by the provision of a small number of **mini-labs** - i.e. self contained machines allowing individual students to listen, respond, record and playback, though without teacher monitoring and control. This can be achieved for a fraction of the cost of a conventional laboratory.

If your requirements are for a certain amount of movement while students listen, but where at a given moment all the students are listening to the same programme, then an **induction loop** may provide the answer at relatively low cost. This system - similar to that used for providing guided commentaries in some museums and art galleries - sends a signal from a master playback machine not to a loudspeaker but to a loop of cable round the classroom: special headsets, which in effect are miniature radio receivers, pick up the signal and make it audible to the students.

## In conclusion

I hope this chapter has not given the impression that using audio resources causes nothing but trouble. My intention was the opposite: to show that none of the problems is insuperable, even if the solution sometimes calls for slight compromises here and there on the grounds of finance and organisation. I firmly believe that the benefits which audio resources can bring to language learning will amply repay the effort needed to ensure that they are a well-managed part of the teacher's and learners' repertoire.

# Useful addresses

## *Suppliers and publishers of audio materials*

Audio-Forum
31 Kensington Church Street, London, W8 4LL Tel: 071-937 1647
publishes *The Whole World Language Catalogue*, giving a comprehensive selection of taped language courses. In addition to materials developed for the Foreign Service Institute courses for U.S. State Department personnel it lists materials for a number of less commonly taught languages, e.g. Spoken Albanian, Dutch, Hausa and Icelandic amongst others.

BBC Books
BBC Enterprises Ltd., Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London, W12 0TT Tel: 081-576 2536
publishes language courses in the main European languages and a number of those less commonly taught: all are accompanied by audio cassettes.

BBC English
P.O. Box 76, Bush House, London WC2B 4PH Tel: 071-257 2886/2851
publishes English teaching materials for a wide range of learners and situations; nearly all of these materials include either an audio or a video component.

The Bournemouth English Book Centre
9 Albion Close, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset, BH12 3LL Tel: 0202 715555
publishes a complete guide to ELT materials which includes a section on listening and speaking skills, as well as noting cassettes which accompany courses or are recordings of texts.

Dillons the Bookstore
publish a comprehensive catalogue of ELT materials, including audio. Four of their shops - those in Oxford, Cambridge, Canterbury and at Gower Street in London - have specialist language departments which offer a service in the fields of English language teaching, EFL and modern language learning. In particular, the Gower Street store carries an extensive range of ELT material, including audio, following recent enlargement. Orders and enquiries may be directed in case of difficulty to Dillons the Bookstore, 82 Gower Street, London, WC1E 6EQ.

Embajada de España
Agregaduria de Educación, 20 Peel Street, London, W8 7PD Tel: 071-727 2462.
The Centro de Recursos publishes a guide to materials for teaching Spanish at all levels; it includes details of the recordings made available through its Programa de Cooperación Cultural Internacional by Radio Nacional de España (RNE) and how to obtain them, as well as a catalogue of its own collection of audio materials which are available for reference.

European Schoolbooks Ltd.
Ashville Training Estate, The Runnings, Cheltenham GL51 9PQ Tel: 0242 245252

are distributors for books and resources, including audio cassettes in French, German, Spanish and Italian. Their catalogue also includes some material in English and miscellaneous languages.

Exeter Tapes
Drake Educational Associates, St. Fagans Road, Fairwater, Cardiff CF5 3AE. Tel: 0222 560333.
Exeter tapes are a series of study tapes in a range of languages (including English) covering a wide spectrum of topics and approaches. Each major language is divided into three sections: Civilisation, Language/Linguistics and Literature.

Goethe Institut
50 Princes Gate, London SW7 2PH Tel: 071-581 3344.
There are also branches in Manchester and York; all have collections of materials including records and audio tapes, which may be borrowed by teachers.

Institiuid Teangeolaiochta Eireann (ITE) - the Linguistics Institute of Ireland
31 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2, Eire publish a range of language teaching materials including supplementary listening materials for learners of French and Spanish. Their magazine *The Language Teacher/An Muinteoir Teanga*, aimed at language teachers in post primary schools in Ireland, contains articles on a range of topics relating to classroom practice.

Linguaphone Institute Ltd.
St. Giles House, 50 Poland Street, London W1V 4AZ Tel: 071-734 0574.
publish language courses with an audio component.

Mary Glasgow Publications Ltd.
Avenue House, 131-133, Holland Park Avenue, London, W11 4UT Tel: 071-603 4688.

Service Culturel de l'Ambassade de France/Bureau d'Action Linguistique
29 Queensbury Place, London SW7 2DT Tel: 071-581 2608.
The Service de Documentation Pedagogique of BAL produces a catalogue of the resources which are available from them on free loan to teachers of French. The collection includes a number of audio resource materials, ranging from pop songs to readings of literary texts, and from radio interviews to recordings of talks and lectures given at the Institut Français as well as a range of course materials.

BROADCASTING ORGANISATIONS

Full information on broadcasting organisations throughout the world can be found in *World Radio TV Handbook (WRTH)* published annually by Billboard Ltd under licence from Billboard A.G., with a sales office at 71 Beak Street, London W1R 3LF. The handbook gives comprehensive country-by-country listings of long, medium and short-wave radio broadcasts by frequency, time and language, as well as details of world satellite and terrestrial television broadcasts. The 1990 edition also includes maps of principal transmitter sites and short-wave receiver test reports, as well as details of world-wide broadcasts in English.

## *Suppliers of language laboratories and audio equipment*

1. Sources of information

CILT publishes a list (CILT Information 50) of suppliers of audio equipment, including language laboratories.

British Educational Equipment Association (BEEA)
111-112 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7PT is a trade association which publishes a membership directory with an index to products and services; it also operates an enquiry service.

National Council for Education (NCET), 3 Devonshire Street, London, W1N 2BA is a government-funded educational trust which promotes the application and development of educational technology in all sectors of education and training. Of particular interest are its USPECS (User Specifications) which give information on the selection and operation of equipment.

2. Suppliers

Abbreviations used:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| cass | - | cassette recorder or player |
| ccass | - | computer controlled cassette machine (lab or individual) |
| cd | - | compact disk player |
| dup | - | high speed cassette duplicator |
| group | - | group listening centres, i.e. distribution boxes and headsets |
| lab | - | language laboratory |
| loop | - | loop system, providing cordless headsets |
| mlab | - | mimilab (individual language laboratory type machine, with or without master track record facility) |
| plab | - | portable language laboratory |
| rcass | - | radio-cassette recorder |
| rplayer | - | record player |
| tape | - | reel tape recorder |

E J Arnold & Son Ltd
Parkside Lane, Dewsbury Road, Leeds LS11 5TD. 0532 772112.
Cass, ccass, group, lab, loop, mlab, plab, rcass, rplayer, tape.

Avcom Systems Ltd
Stanlake Mews, Stanlake Villas, London, W12 7HS. 081-740 0051.
Dup, group, loop.

F W O Bauch Ltd
49 Theobald Street, Boreham Wood, Herts, WD6 4RZ. 081-953 0091.
Tape, other.

The Cambridge System Ltd
63 High Street, Buckden, Huntingdon, PE18 9TA. 0480 812213.
Mlab.

Connevans Ltd
54 Albert Road North, Reigate, Surrey, RJ2 9YR. 0737 247571.
Loop. Also other equipment for the hearing-impaired.

Coomber Electronic Equipment Ltd
Croft Walk, (Nr Pitchcroft), Worcester, WR1 3NZ. 0905 25168.
Cass, group, rcass, rplayer. Also trolley-based 'multi-sound centre'.

Educational Company Ltd
Longlands Avenue, Newtownabbey, Co Antrim, Northern Ireland, BT36 7ND.
0232 365333.
Cass, cd, dup, rcass, rplayer, tape.

ELF Goodsell Ltd
New England House, New England Street, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 4GH. 0273 605752.
Formerly Goodsell Ltd, now part of Elf Holdings (qv).

ELF Holdings Ltd
836 Yeovil Road, Trading Estate, Slough, Berks, SL1 4JG. 0753 36123.
Cass, group, lab (incl PALE equipment), plab, rcass, rplayer, other.

Euro-calc (Distribution) Ltd
Unit 4, Redbridge Enterprise Centre, Thompson Close, Ilford, Essex, IG1 1TY. 081-553 0515.
Cass, dup, group.

The Force Ten Company Ltd
183 Boundary Road, Woking, Surrey, GU21 5BU. 0483 762711.
Cass, lab.

Format PC Ltd
Goods Wharf, Goods Road, Belper, DE5 1UU. 0773-820011.
Ccass.

Graff Electronic Machines Ltd (GEM)
Woodhill Road, Collingham, Newark, Nottingham, NG23 7NR. 0636 893036.
Dup.

Hanimex (UK) Ltd
Hanimex House, Dorcan, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 5HW. 0973 26211.
Cass, dup, group.

Hope Education
St Philip's Drive, Royton, Oldham, OL2 6AG. 061-633 6611.
Cass, ccass, dup, group, rcass, rplay.

Irwin Desman
294 Purley Way, Croydon, CR9 4QL. 081-686 6441.
Cass, tape.

Mar-com Systems Ltd
Marcom House, 1 Heathlands, Heath Gardens, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1 4BP. 081-891 5061.
Cass, ccass, cd, dup, group, lab, loop, mlab, plab, rcass, rplayer, tape.

Nottingham Education Supplies (NES)
Ludlow Hill Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 6HD. 0602 452200.
Cass, ccass, rcass.

R J Education Supplies Ltd
Unit 2, Westerham Trade Centre, London Road, Westerham, Kent, TN16 3BR.
0959 62255.
Cass, ccass, cd, dup, group, lab, mlab, plab, rcass, tape, other.

Tandberg Educational Ltd
7 Hales Road, Wortley, Leeds, LS12 4PL. 0532 799116.
Cass, ccass, dup, group, lab, mlab, plab, other.

Transaid Audio Visual Supplies
Francis Gregory & Son Ltd, Radley Road Industrial Estate, Abingdon, Oxon, 0X14 3RY.
0235 555002.
Cass, ccass, dup, group, lab, plab, tape, other.

Uni-com Electronics Ltd
Enterprise Way, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 6EW. 0732 865238.
Cass, cd, mlab, plab, rcass, other.

# Suggestions for further reading


Alkin E G M (1981) *Sound recording and reproduction* Focal Press.
For the professional engineer and the enthusiastic amateur wishing to improve his technique and to understand the recording medium and sound quality in general.

Baer E R (Ed) (1976) *Teaching languages: ideas and guidance for teachers working with adults*. BBC.
Particularly relevant are the sections on *Teaching aids and resources* (B Hill) and *Making the most of radio and television* (B Hill and E R Baer).

Buckby M, D Morris, B Page and S Woods (1986) *Teaching modern languages for the GCSE*, BALT/MLA.
A very practical guide, and the section on the teaching of listening skills is particularly applicable.

Cambell I A C (1986) 'Perimeter audio-learning equipment (PALE)' in *Modern Languages in Scotland*, 30.
Strathclyde's solution to the problem of providing technology appropriate to communicative language teaching.

Dyson A P (Ed) (Winter 1980) *British journal of language teaching* Vol 18, No's 2/3.
A special double issue devoted entirely to the use of broadcast material in language teaching.

Ely P (1984) *Bring the lab back to life*, Pergamon.
Covers laboratory management and organisation, listening comprehension exercises requiring communication between students, stimulus and response exercises, storytelling. Examples from EFL teaching.

Evans E (1977) *Radio: a guide to broadcasting techniques*, Barrie and Jenkins.

Gaskell R (Spring 1977) 'Using foreign texts in post O-level teaching' in *Audio-visual language journal*, Vol 15, No 1.

Hares R J (1979) *Teaching French*, Hodder and Stoughton.
Contains a section on the exploitation of radio broadcasts.

Hayes A (1980) *Language laboratory management: a handbook for teachers*, British Council.
Includes lists of essential and optional facilities, commentaries on different room layouts, advice on creation, adaptation and evaluation of materials.

Hewer S (1989) *Making the most of IT skills*, CILT.

Hill B (1989) *Making the most of video*, CILT

Jones B (1986) *French. A guide for teachers.* Secondary Examinations Council in collaboration with the Open University.
The SEC's INSET Guide. Full of practical suggestions many of which can be applied to broadcasts.

Kirk D (1975) *Audio and video recording*, Faber.
Includes sections on studio microphone technique, television cameras and monitors, and on location video recording.

Littlewood, W (1981) *Communicative language teaching: an introduction*, Cambridge University Press.

McLeish R (1989) *The technique of radio production*, Focal Press, 2nd ed.
An analysis of programme making based on the BBC's practical approach to community broadcasting and the public response to it.

Nisbett A (1983) *The use of microphones* (Media manuals), Focal Press, n.e.
This manual covers microphones for radio and television and is intended for the professional and the student.

Sinclair I R (1977) *Beginner's guide to audio*, Newnes.
Shows the working principles of devices ranging from the microphone to the loudspeaker and gives examples of the electronic circuits used along with them.

Tomalin B (1986) *Video, TV and Radio in the English Class* ELTS, Macmillan.
An introductory guide to the use of video, TV and radio in the teaching of English, although the principles can easily be applied to other languages. Sound practical advice.

Ur P (1984) *Teaching listening comprehension*, Cambridge University.

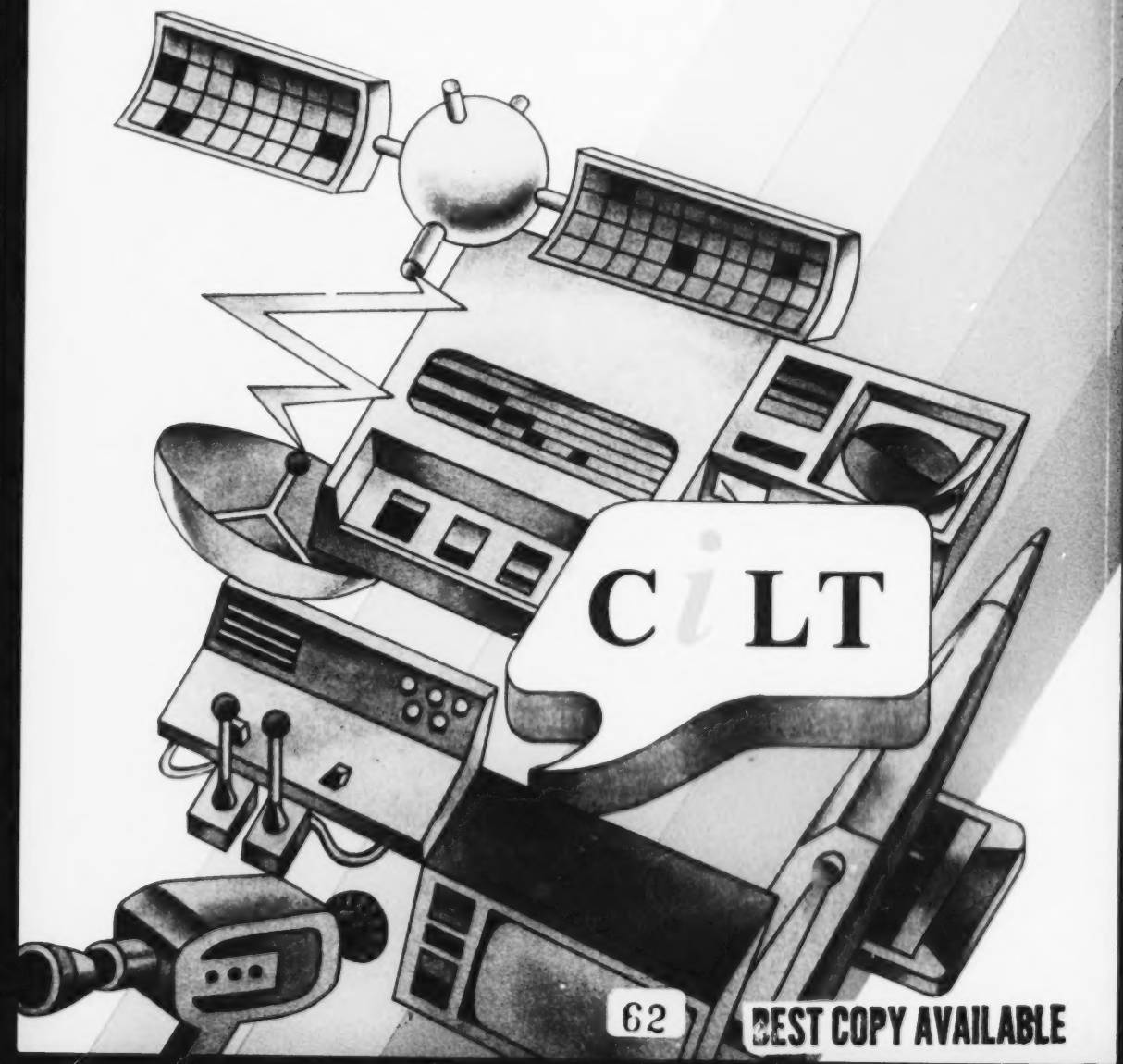
- (1981) *French 16-19: A New Perspective*, Hodder and Stoughton.
Includes specimen test material based on radio broadcasts, as well as an appendix on the exploitation of spoken and written texts. Compiled by a group of teachers.

- (1985) *German for 'A' level: a resource-based approach*, CILT.
Produced by a working party of teachers; inspired by 'French 16-19: a new perspective', it gives a range of examples of resources, with detailed suggestions for exploitation. Radio and television extracts are included.

ISBN 0 948003 73 1

This is a book for practising language teachers. Its aim is to help them - whether they teach English or a foreign language - to make the most of a readily accessible resource. It shows, with the help of numerous practical examples, how a range of language skills can be developed.

Other sections deal with classroom organisation, including the making of recordings, and with points to be borne in mind in the selection of equipment.

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